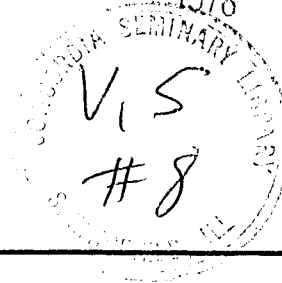




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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"

2 Cor. 4:13

The Neunaber Case

FOR several years now eight district presidents of Missouri have consistently said they were not bound by the Constitution and Bylaws of their church.

They have openly upheld the broken agreements of their congregations, made when they became members of Missouri, and just as openly broken the vows they took when they themselves entered Missouri.

There can be no question about these facts; they themselves state them and act according to their statements.

They have acted against their church; they have caused confusion and consternation in her midst; and they have in no way shown any sign of repentance for what they have done to Missouri and have taken no action to reverse themselves and try to undo the damage Missouri has experienced.

There seems to be no need to recite their positions and actions with respect to ELIM, Seminex, ordination, and other matters. Nor does it seem necessary to explore once more the theology they use to support their acts, a deviant theology, especially with regard to God's Word, but often also in other matters. They interpret the Bible in ways never intended by God.

No church body can live confessionally so torn apart.

For that reason the Anaheim Convention voted a clear course of action for Missouri's president in dealing with these eight: it determined the pastoral, firm and loving procedure he was to follow with them.

The church at this convention stipulated that the president of Missouri was to deal pastorally with these eight and that, if he were unsuccessful, no later than 60 days before the district convention of a district headed by one of the eight, Missouri's top man was to declare the office of such a district president vacant. The clear language left him no options.

THE test case turned out to be that of Dr. Neunaber of the Southern Illinois District. Since its convention occurs some time late in February, Missouri's president had till about the 20th of December to carry out the will of Synod.

He did not do this.

In the early part of December he talked with Neunaber and others in the district and concluded that more counselling was necessary, that many lacked information or had distorted facts, and that a series of meetings on the circuit level should precede the convention in order to relieve tensions and to produce at the convention a harmony which will permit the district joyously to go forward again in Christ's mission.

Missouri's president stated, "Our primary purpose is to gain the brother, to conduct life together pastorally, and to take counsel and discuss together in an atmosphere of love and patience in an effort to retain the bond of mutual confidence which should prevail in a church body."

It is a laudable goal.

However, a decade of effort has gone into such conferring on many levels in dozens of committees and hundreds of meetings.

Moreover, the Anaheim resolution occurred in the early part of July; in view of Missouri's crisis, which presumably makes counselling with these eight one of the highest items on the president's agenda, it seems a little odd that he could not get around to this primary task for five months and, then only, when the nearness of the Southern Illinois convention no longer made it possible for him to avoid it.

The Neunaber case is the test case.

Were it properly carried to its conclusion according to the Anaheim resolution, the long, uphill struggle of conservatives in Missouri might, by grace, soon be successfully concluded.

ONE section of Missouri's governing documents may still give Missouri's president the power to vacate the office.

Does the Neunaber case indicate whether or not Missouri's president is as subject to the *Handbook* and the decisions of Synod as the lowliest member of the church?

Does he feel no more bound by the rulings of a convention than those who protest these decisions?

It may be that success will nevertheless occur in the Illinois case. However, seven more district presidents must be dealt with and, judging from their statements and actions, they will maintain the theological stance they have taken. What will Missouri's president do about them?

Meanwhile, several other observations seem appropriate.

Missouri's president apparently has added to the confusion in his own church body.

Moreover, it is difficult to believe, as he suggests, that a Southern Illinois resolution calling on all members of Synod to abide by its *Handbook* and decisions will have any far-reaching effect.

In addition, the long paragraph near the end of the president's letter to Neunaber, almost urging upon him the various avenues of proper dissent open to him and seemingly encouraging him to use them, will hardly be beneficial to Missouri.

Perhaps our current president can still lead us out of the morass into which Missouri has floundered. Pray God he will! Pray God to give him the strength of the convictions needed for that task!

The Tietjen Case—Unfinished Business

Phase two of the Tietjen case, dealing only with his membership in Synod, has moved forward another step with the appeal of Pastors Buelow and Harnapp from the decision of Missouri District Vice-President Gerken to synodical President Preus in accordance with Bylaw 5.13.

Phase one involved Dr. Tietjen's fitness to be president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. After the charges against him underwent a three-fold evaluation by Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations, the faculty hearings committee, and the Seminary Board of Control, the Board found him guilty on five counts of false doctrine and nine items of malfeasance.

Following Dr. Tietjen's unwillingness to appeal the case, the Board of Control decision regarding his seminary presidency became final.

Since the charges are such that they could also lead to removal from the ministry of the church, the case, in this second phase, went first to the Missouri District President. He disqualified himself and gave the case to the District first vice-president, Rev. Oscar Gerken. He found Dr. Tietjen at variance with Synod's doctrinal position on a number of counts but refused to disqualify him for the ministry.

Much misunderstanding resulted in the church when some spoke of complete exoneration, of the case being now closed, and

the like. Pastor Gerken's decision, contrary to much that was said and printed, by no means concluded the case.

Pastors Buelow and Harnapp, in harmony with Synod's procedures, have now appealed the case. One would hardly expect them to do otherwise, considering the lengthy CTCR opinion on the doctrinal questions at issue, the conclusions reached by the faculty hearings committee, and the action of the Board of Control. In any case of church discipline either the charges prove to be unfounded, or the person is found guilty and repents and is restored, or he is found guilty, does not repent, and is removed. In any event, the case must be concluded. To drop it in the middle of proper procedures is improper and inconceivable. If left unresolved, the Tietjen case would haunt our Synod indefinitely.

The temptation must have been strong for the two busy parish pastors who filed the charges to simply let the matter drop and thus be relieved of further cost, harassment, and hate mail. We commend them for their moral stamina and their willingness to proceed with the case.

The matter is now in the hands of synodical President Preus. He can either handle it himself or assign it to the Missouri District Board of Adjudication. If it goes to the District Board, that body's decision may be appealed by either party to the synodical Board of Appeals.

In cases of church discipline the process should be orderly and careful. Due concern must be given for the rights of all concerned. But it should not take years to decide whether one of our pastors or professors is guilty of false doctrine. Undue delay and unnecessarily complicated procedures are unfair to the person charged, to the congregation, or, in this case, to the Synod. The Tietjen case was assigned by Synod itself to the Seminary Board of Control in July of 1973, and it is still far from being concluded. The synodical by-laws need to be restudied and revised.

Affirm

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The Beck Translation

IN his early pastoral years at Clayton, Illinois, Dr. William F. Beck wanted his confirmation class youngsters to have their memory work Bible passages in an up-to-date English that was simple and yet faithful to the original languages. The translations he did for the children of his parish led Dr. Beck to a lifelong and unswerving dedication to the goal of a complete Bible in today's English.

Concordia Publishing House issued the New Testament in 1963. Dr. Beck lived to complete the manuscript work on the Old Testament whose publication was delayed by Concordia Publishing House's reluctance to undertake the project. We commend Rev. Herman Otten, editor of *Christian News*, for his determination to fulfil his promise to Dr. Beck that he would see to the publication if CPH did not do so. At long last, "*Beck's Bible*" is on the market.

HOW good a translation is it? We leave this to qualified scholars who will need time for a thorough evaluation. Meanwhile, those who found Beck's New Testament pleasing and useful certainly will welcome the complete Bible. Obviously, there is no such thing as a perfect translation. There will always be honest differences among scholars as to which English word or phrase best reflects the intent of the Greek and Hebrew. However, all translations into modern English, though varying in accuracy, serve the good purpose of conveying the Word of God to 20th century readers. Beck's Bible is a valuable addition to that growing list of modern English translation.

The pre-publication price was \$3 for the paperback and \$4.95 for hard cover. Even though this probably has been increased, the price will be right. If your local book-store does not have it, you may order directly from *Christian News*, Box 168, New Haven, Missouri 63068.

Neunaber's Ideas of Congregational Rights

In his "explanation" of the events which led to the ordination of Seminex graduate Leonard Hoffmann at Cahokia, Ill., November 23, Dr. Herman Neunaber asks the question "Shall one say no to the request of Mount Calvary Congregation because of *Handbook* 'diploma' and 'endorsement' requirements? Or shall one affirm and protect the Biblical and confessional rights of a congregation to call a qualified pastor?" *Reporter*, December 1, 1975, P.7). He proceeds to state correctly "The right to call candidates into the office of the holy ministry belongs to the congregation and to the congregation alone" but then concludes incorrectly that a choice must be made between *Handbook* stipulations and congregational rights in situations such as that at Cahokia.

For what Dr. Neunaber does not state affects the conclusion. The question is not the right of a congregation to call candidates into the ministry but rather its right to violate the solemn agreement it has made with its fellow Christians when it joined the Synod. In signing the Constitution and joining the Synod, a congregation voluntarily accepts some limitations on its autonomy. Under Article II of the Constitution it accepts without reservation the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions: it may not therefore propose a conditional acceptance of the Lutheran Confessions and accept them "insofar as" they agree with the Scriptures as some pastors and congregations who want to call themselves Lutheran have done.

Under Article VI of the Constitution the congregation agrees to a number of other limitations on its autonomy. It agrees to renounce unionism and syncretism of every description. It agrees not to participate in heterodox tract and missionary activities. It agrees to use only a doctrinally pure agenda, doctrinally pure hymnbooks, and doctrinally pure catechisms.

What is especially interesting in connection with the limitations a congregation voluntarily accepts in Article VI of the Constitution is the limitation of extending only a "regular call of pastors and teachers." In defining this term, the Synod in convention in 1969 (Res. 5-23) stated:

The term 'regular call' as used in our Synod has always meant a call extended in conformity with the procedures adopted by the Synod as set forth in the *Handbook*. The very fact that the 'regular election' of delegates is required in the same sentence leaves no doubt of this. . . .

The procedures set forth in the *Handbook* are of course the Bylaws which provide for the endorsement of a candidate either by the faculty of one of the two synodical seminaries or by the colloquy board. So it is the Constitution itself (not the Bylaws only) and the solemn agreement with fellow Christians that a congregation makes when it signs the Constitution that are violated when an unendorsed candidate is ordained or subsequently installed.

Dr. Neunaber quotes Article VII of the Constitution. Does this article contradict Article VI? By no means. The first sentence says very simply that a congregation retains the right of self government so far as its internal affairs are concerned. The Synod has no right to prescribe the number or type of officers that a congregation shall have, the frequency of its services or voters meetings, the disposition of the funds which it collects. Affairs that affect matters outside the congregation and hence the rights and welfare of the brothers and sisters in the faith are governed by the solemn agreements of the Constitution and Bylaws to which we have referred above.

The right of inexpediency referred to in the second sentence of Article VII applies only to the internal affairs of the congregation, not to its relationships with brothers and sisters in the faith. It has been so interpreted by the Synod itself in convention. Resolution 5-23 of the Denver Convention to which we have referred says "The right of a congregation to exercise the right of expediency (Bylaw 1.09b) applies only to the resolutions of the Synod and not to the Constitution and Bylaws" and immediately prior to this sentence the convention stated "Refusal to comply with the rules and regulations of the Synod constitutes divisive and unbrotherly conduct which destroys the very concept of the Synod as a 'walking together'."

What about the argument that a congregation or a member of the Synod does not agree with an interpretation of the Constitution or Bylaws made by a convention and did not so understand these when it joined the Synod? Here the provisions of Section 1.09 of the *Handbook* which deal with dissent are applicable, but the dissent should be expressed within a reasonable time or agreement with the interpretation may be assumed. There is no indication of substantial dissent to Resolution 5-23 of the Denver Convention and while there may have been a scattering of "No" votes, the minutes do not record such negative votes. At least one congregation dissented subsequently from this interpretation of the Denver Convention, and this congregation is on record as dissenting.

With regard to dissent to the Denver resolution which is raised today, the legal principle of laches applies. Under this principle a right is forfeited when there is undue delay in asserting it. While we would never want to cut off a brother and refuse to hear him, his case is weakened when he seemingly concurs for some years and then suddenly protests. We may assume his earlier lack of dissent signified agreement with the convention action.

It should finally be stated that the Synod operates by majority rule. Even those congregations which have followed proper procedures for dissent are bound by the Constitution, the Bylaws, and the interpretations of these made by the Commission on Constitutional Matters and the Synod itself in convention. The Synod wants to listen and to hear those who dissent. The Synod may even reverse itself on a matter not governed by the Word of God. But it does expect those who wish to continue their membership in the Synod to respect the wishes and the decisions of the majority.

A Vital Point

This editorial was written before the 51st regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at Anaheim, California. However, it will be read after the convention is over. Nonetheless, one does not need to be a prophet to know that the present controversy concerning the doctrine of Holy Scriptures will still be alive after Anaheim. A recent publication does much to shed light on what is at stake. I refer to the Lutheran Education Yearbook for 1975. It bears the title *After the Purifying*. Its author is Paul A. Bretscher.

Bretscher has rendered a service in making clear what the controversy is all about. It is no trivial matter, no mere spat over terminology. The issue is: Can we say that the entire Bible is the Word of God? Or must we say that the Word of God is to be found in the Bible together with some purely human content? Bretscher states clearly that these two positions on the Holy Scriptures in the Missouri Synod today are in conflict and that each of them cannot be regarded as having equal legitimacy. His thesis is that the turmoil in Synod is a purifying fire that God is using to separate the dross from the gold.

Bretscher attempts to convince his readers that for Luther, "The 'Word of God' is not simply equivalent to the Bible. It stands rather for specific things that God is saying, which He expects us to believe in our hearts concerning our relationship to Him" (page 14). Bretscher then goes on to reject the Missouri Synod "tradition and piety" which equate the Word of God with the Holy Scriptures in their totality.

After the Purifying defines the phrase "Word of God" as "the Gospel in all its senses, including also the antithetical law" (page 18). Bretscher calls this the "vertical" dimension in the Bible. But he believes there is also a "horizontal" dimension. This is the language of men which involves the "historical reality of Scripture" (page 86). The latter is of a different order of truth. In approaching this part of Scripture one seeks "what makes sense by sound reason." It is to be accepted only if the evidence seems reasonable. (page 91)

Some may think that this is not a serious distinction. But the true light is put on it by the author's assertion that belonging to the horizontal line (human) in the Bible are such matters as "the historicity and facticity of persons and events. . . the authenticity of Jesus' own utterances in relation to the voices of witnesses who breathed His Spirit and spoke His name and with the interchangeable identification between Jesus and His Church." (page 87).

Bretscher says it is "not appropriate" in dealing with such questions to appeal to "the Bible's inspiration and authority" (page 87). In other words, these things need not be believed on the basis of "It is written."

Anyone even slightly acquainted with the historical-critical approach knows what Bretscher is saying. The central articles of the Christian faith may be believed while at the same time one may not necessarily accept the facticity of all the events described in the Scriptures on which those central articles are based or with which they are intimately connected.

Anyone slightly acquainted with either Luther or the Lutheran Confessions will have trouble accepting Bretscher's thesis as being a truly Lutheran approach to Scriptures. Holsten Fagerberg in his *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions* (CPH, 1972) writes: "One of the most common expressions used side by side

with the 'Holy Scriptures' is 'God's Word.' The Confessions use the concept 'God's Word' to refer either to the Bible or to a certain word in the Bible." (page 16)

It is instructive also to look at the Formula of Concord which in its introduction refers both to "the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments" as the "only true norm" (Tappert Ed. 504:3) and shortly thereafter to the "Word of God" as "the sole rule and norm" (Tappert Ed. 505:9). Examples of such interchangeable uses of "Scriptures" and "Word of God" in the Confessions are legion. The Confessions thus disagree with Bretscher as does Luther when he wrote in a sermon on the doctrine of the Trinity: "This must be accepted by faith. . . for Holy Scriptures, which is God's Word, says so, and I abide by what is stated." (*Luther's Works*, American Edition 22:6)

Doubtless much attention will be given to *After the Purifying*. It calls for careful analysis, for it is a challenge to the Synod's position on the doctrine of Holy Scriptures, and it cannot be ignored.

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The above article is reprinted from the September-October, 1975 issue of Lutheran Education, edited by the faculty of Concordia Teachers College.

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A Lay Analysis of a Rebellious District

AT the special September 1975 convention of my English District at Northlake, Illinois an English District position statement was adopted, but not, however, without dissent by some loyal Missourians. Dissent to the English District position is understandable. Indeed, this dissent to the District position shows wisdom. Indeed, such dissent to the District position shows courage. Indeed, such dissent to the District position shows profound loyalty to the solid Scriptural and Confessional position of our Synod as a Synod.

The Position Statement says, "Various changes in structure and organizational identity have been prayerfully considered by many. For the majority, however, the call of our Gospel ministry continues to be within the fellowship of the LC-MS. Current difficulties, however, compel us to express a positive confessional stance." One reasonably expects to find a ringing, unequivocal declaration thereafter on matters which are in fact clearly taught in Scripture and ably presented in our Lutheran Confessions. One reasonably expects to find a brilliant, thoughtful and incisive Scriptural statement dealing with the theological problems troubling our Synod as so well detailed in the so-called *Blue Book* and so aptly summarized in New Orleans Resolution 3-09. (See Convention *Proceedings*, pps. 133-139.) In disappointment the reader of the English District position statement sees an open and loud invitation to rebel and to break the walking together that the very term "Synod" represents.

For an opener, my District President is commended for dedicated service to the church. Upon reflection one is compelled to inquire how open violation of our church's orderly rules of procedure or open identification with a theological stance of a group that was condemned by the Synod at New Orleans is "service" to be commended.

IN rapid fire order my District expresses its view that an injustice has been done "...to the faculty and student body of Concordia Seminary-in-Exile" conveniently overlooking the stark, factual data of theological aberrations in the voluminous transcripts of the Fact Finding Committee and set out in condensed form in the *Blue Book* or the walkout by former faculty and students of the Concordia Seminary. It plays a "Can You Top This" game by expressing the conviction "Seminex" is a seminary of the Synod to be supported morally and financially by the District. Compare this to the ACTION of the SYNOD in Anaheim Resolution 6-02 resolving, "That the Synod, by the mercies of God, would beseech those in conducting and supporting Seminex to CLOSE the institution..." and stating that "Seminex", "...if it continues to exist, will be regarded as any other theological school NOT affiliated with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod." (Emphasis supplied.)

Very properly one may inquire how under God's law or man's law my District can assume a posture of a moral support of "Seminex" when the Synod itself in Anaheim Resolution 6-06 recites, "Whereas, Seminex has wrongfully expropriated the name "Concordia Seminary" as a part of its corporate name and/or identity..." and authorizes the taking of appropriate action by the Boards of Control of Concordia Seminary St. Louis and Springfield and the Board of Directors.

My District continues by directing its President to continue to ordain "Seminex" graduates thus repeating in effect 1974 District Resolution 9-6 which said in part "...that we affirm the

inherent right of a Missouri Synod congregation to call and ordain a Seminex graduate." The District thereby unilaterally has determined that it and congregations of the Synod can ignore the Synodical Constitution and Bylaws to which both have bound themselves. Consider for a moment that Synodical Bylaw 1.09 stipulates that "...the Constitution, Bylaws, and all other rules and regulations of the Synod apply to all members of the Synod...". Consider also that Bylaw 3.07 provides, "The Synod is not merely an advisory body in relation to a District. A District is the Synod itself performing the functions of the Synod. Resolutions of the Synod are binding on the Districts." Surely such simple and unequivocal words in the very language whose name my District bears are understood by the District. Nonetheless, the District further states "...we shall welcome into fellowship other LC-MS congregations which may wish to become members of our English District. We further pledge to maintain fellowship with any congregation which may be expelled from the Synod for exercising congregational autonomy by calling and requesting ordination of graduates of Concordia Seminary-in-Exile."

INTERESTINGLY, in spite of such rebellious action my District affirms "...our desire to remain in the LC-MS." It is an irreconcilable contrast to act as distinguished from expressed will. My District then, referring to the Synod, says that "...we cherish the best of her doctrine, confession and proclamation." The most obvious import of such a statement is that not all of our Synod's "...doctrine, confession and proclamation" is solidly Scriptural. Please observe that no citation to error is shown. Such a tactic is similar to that taken by some who object to *A Statement* but who cannot show that it is unScriptural. My District then threatens to ask its congregations to revert to a status "...as an independent Synod or to seek other institutional affiliation if it becomes clear that the LC-MS does not intend to return to its former confessional position, and to its former evangelical practice which respects diversity within the unity of the church." No evidence of departure from the confessional position of the "old" Missouri is shown. Is one to conclude therefore that Pieper and Walther are now being embraced by the District or is one to conclude that the "old" Missouri in reality refers to the so-called theological stance of the former St. Louis Seminary faculty condemned by the Synod in New Orleans Resolution 309?

The dangers of the rebellious position of the District are painfully apparent. Firm but loving implementation of the Anaheim Resolutions is required forthwith if we are to remain a Synod. The Synodical President must act decisively.

(Note: References to the English District position statement are taken from the statement as it appears in the November 24, 1975 issue of *Missouri In Perspective*.)

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Congregations and other groups may order copies of *Affirm* at the bulk rate of \$4.00 per hundred. This price includes postage and handling. Single copies are 10 cents each.

Tenure—One Way Or Two Way Street?

TENURE provides security, but in return it imposes a responsibility on those to whom it is awarded. The "standard" tenure plan embodied in the 1940 "Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure" developed by the Association of American Colleges and the American Association of University Professors views tenure "as a means of ensuring academic freedom and of providing sufficient economic security to make the academic profession attractive to men and women of ability" ("Faculty Tenure—A Report and Recommendations by the Commission on Academic Tenure in Higher Education" p. 2, Jossey Bass, San Francisco, 1973). It provides security for those whose teaching abilities have been recognized and protects them from arbitrary and capricious dismissal.

But tenure was never viewed as a one-way street even though it has sometimes been represented in this way. The Fall, 1975 issue of *Dialogue* says "Tenure, quite simply, is a promise made by a group of scholars, and by any others responsible for the group's work, to one of its members. 'From now on', they say, 'so long as our group survives, you may do your work among us whether or not we continue to approve of it!'" *Dialogue* goes on to say that "the tenure-promise made...may have been unwisely made, or made for inappropriate reasons. But the promise once made, all that is henceforth ethically irrelevant. The very content of the tenure-promise is, 'From now on, discussion of whether you individually ought to be here, will carry only persuasive sanctions.' The performance for the sake of which tenure was granted, may have—in someone's judgment—deteriorated. This, too, is quite irrelevant, for the same reason. . . . Dismissing tenured faculty is promise breaking, however you explain it."

THERE are ethical issues involved, but these are by no means only the ones to which *Dialogue* refers. The individual who has been granted tenure assumes certain responsibilities when he accepts tenure. He is responsible first of all to those whom he teaches. Accounts of individual faculty members who stagnated once they received tenure are legion. Proving that a faculty member has failed to deliver what he has contracted to deliver in the classroom is difficult, and it is also difficult to dismiss a tenured faculty member who obviously is cheating his students by looking on his teaching responsibilities as a sinecure. To rest on your oars once you have been tenured is a violation of God's seventh commandment. It is stealing just as much as it is stealing for those in other professions and occupations not to carry out the responsibilities which they have assumed.

Tenured faculty members also have a responsibility to the supporting institution and those who support it. This is particularly important in the case of a church-related or church-supported institution. Christian colleges and seminaries were founded to propagate the faith, to teach that which was regarded as true by those who founded it. And Christian colleges and seminaries continue to be supported by those who wish to maintain and perpetuate a particular point of view. No one would limit the right of a person to learn elsewhere or to teach elsewhere: no one is arguing against the individual's practice of

academic freedom within the limitations he has freely accepted in joining a church-related or church-supported faculty. But it is unethical to take money given by individuals to support the teaching of a particular point of view and then to disparage and disagree with that point of view in the classroom. Teachers do have a tremendous influence on their students, and they need to be conscious of the responsibility that they have in presenting the point of view espoused by those who are paying their salaries. If they cannot do this, they are ethically obligated to seek employment elsewhere.

FACULTY members also have a responsibility to an institution in terms of its survival. Everyone recognizes that these are trying times in educational circles. Many institutions have failed and closed their doors and some are threatened with this same fate unless they can reduce faculties to a point which is within their financial capabilities. *Dialogue* grudgingly concedes this possibility "Academia's integrity, in the present connection, demands that dismissing tenured faculty be a genuinely last resort; if money must be saved, let it be done otherwise." But it fails to go on to suggest how this money might be saved. The 1940 AAUP Statement provides for a termination of tenure "under extraordinary circumstances because of financial exigencies," and goes on to state "termination of a continuous appointment because of financial exigency should be demonstrably bonafide." Obviously termination of the services of a tenure faculty member is a very painful thing, but there are times when the survival of the institution demands this. Under these circumstances the Christian ethic would suggest refraining from harassment and delay when the very existence of the institution is threatened.

Tenure has its place. The called faculty member has the same right to protection as the called pastor. Indeed if we honestly accept the concept of the divinity of the call in connection with calls to educational institutions we have a right to expect the same tenure considerations as are usually associated with the call extended to a pastor. Unfortunately the emphasis in tenure considerations have often been on the rights and privileges of tenure with little or no attention given to the responsibilities that tenure imposes. A Christian ethic would demand that the responsibilities of tenure also receive a modicum of attention.

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Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

ALC Update

Christians are one in Christ. Reflecting Scripture's "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," we confess with joy in the Nicene Creed, "I believe *one* holy Christian and Apostolic Church." These united Christians, alas, are often divided by doctrinal differences. Thus we have the one invisible church and the many visible churches.

A proper response is two-fold. We recognize and rejoice in the unity in Christ. We recognize, deplore, and seek to remove the differences. The latter explains the long years of doctrinal discussions and efforts toward God-pleasing unity between the Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church, and the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

At the 1969 Denver Convention, Synod declared that Missouri was in sufficient agreement with the ALC to warrant altar and pulpit fellowship. But the vote was close and Synod recognized the need for continuing efforts to resolve remaining points of disagreement.

What has happened since 1969 to our fellowship with the ALC? An honest appraisal shows that the ALC, despite valiant efforts by a conservative minority in that church body, is leaning increasingly toward the more liberal LCA. Sad to say, in basic questions regarding God's Word (verbal inspiration, the historical-critical method of interpretation), ordination of women, abortion, lodge practice, and other areas Missouri and the ALC are drifting further apart. The fond hopes of 1969 are not being realized. The fears then expressed are coming true.

Meanwhile, the divergence becomes more evident daily by ALC acts of alienation that seem almost designed to belittle and insult the Missouri Synod.

For example, when the Association of Theological Schools met in Atlanta in June of 1974, the ten representatives of nine ALC and LCA seminaries joined in organized and repeated efforts to destroy the accreditation of our St. Louis Seminary. Resolutions were offered that supported the schools harboring Concordia's breakaway faculty and students, directed the Seminary's Board of Control to take steps to reinstate Dr. Tietjen and the dismissed faculty, directed the ATS professional staff to involve itself in Concordia's internal matters, and sought to have the Seminary declared a school that was "seeking accreditation." That all but the first of these were either defeated or declared out of order was due to the good judgment of the chairman and the votes of representatives from non-Lutheran schools.

Another surface demonstration of the widening rift between the LC-MS and the ALC took place at the inauguration of Dr. Ralph Bohlmann as president of Concordia Seminary. Representatives from almost 50 theological schools in the United States participated in the two-day academic celebration, but not one seminary of either the ALC or the LCA had the courtesy to send a representative. The liberal publication, *Missouri in Perspective* (Nov. 10, 1975), concedes that the Lutherans were "noticeably absent" and quoted President William Weiblen of Wartburg as saying, "With sadness I could not participate in an event like that. To me it would have meant approving of the whole sad course of events at Concordia Seminary." The fact is that attendance at such presidential inaugurations is simply a matter of academic courtesy. Mere words from the ALC and LCA about love, kindness, consideration, and reconciliation pick up a hypocritical tinge from such calculated insults.

A third example of how things stand between the ALC and the Missouri Synod is found in an article by ALC President Dr. David Preus in an ALC publication, *Commentator* (October 1975). He views the "tragic division" in Missouri and says that the ALC will "stand by the victims of the controversy." This has a nice sound until one reads further regarding just who the "victims" are and what sort of help is being offered. The victims, it turns out, are Missouri's liberals. The offer to stand by them "May mean acceptance of a new congregation in the ALC." Where the ALC cannot pick up an entire congregation and a Missouri Synod congregation splits then "It may mean welcoming people warmly as they transfer into ALC congregations."

The article concludes with a plea that the ALC people "continue to pray for our sisters and brothers." Missouri needs, wants, and appreciates the prayers of God's people everywhere as our Synod agonizes over its doctrinal direction for generations to come. But one thing we do not need is ecclesiastical vultures circling overhead. Someone once tried to help Mark Twain at a difficult time in his life. Mark Twain said of these efforts, "He encumbered me with assistance." This pretty well describes the moves being made by both the ALC and the LCA as they observe Missouri in her present anguish.

All of which impinges on the 1969 declaration of fellowship between the ALC and the LC-MS. One thing is certain, at Dallas in 1977 Synod should honestly ask itself how much substance there really is in the present paper agreement between the two church bodies.

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

Nothing New— Liberal Politicking In the Missouri Synod

A meeting at the Forest Park Hotel in St. Louis on February 3, 1947, with such men as O. P. Kretzmann and Semine Professor Richard Caemmerer present was held before the 1947 Synodical Convention for consideration of a proposed plan for considered action on the part of some liberals who maintained that many members of the Praesidium and Board of Directors should be voted out of office. An informal slate of "acceptable" candidates was drawn up for those positions at the 1947 convention. Concordia Historical Institute has the notes of this meeting, as well as letters to E. J. Gallmeyer and to Adolph F. Meyer, in Theodore Graebner Box 118. This was revealed in an article in "ISSUES ... IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION" published by Concordia Teachers College of Seward (Summer 1974, Volume 8, No. 3) in "Conflict in Missouri's Past—The Analysis of Theodore Graebner" by Jerrald K. Pabe.

Liberal plans to influence and take over Synod were made for many years, and such evidence as above is not really needed.

—From The East Coast Edition
The Lutheran Voice

"Supporting the Doctrinal Stance of
the Missouri Synod"

The National Ev. Lutheran Conference
Volume 3, Number 6, November, 1975

We Need Your Help!

As events in Missouri indicate—some of them summarized on these pages—Missouri may be passing through her most crucial and darkest hour.

Most of us probably thought that the sound Anaheim resolutions for dealing on a practical level with our difficulties would shift the scene of the struggle to the district and congregational level, where it would be resolved within a year or so at the outside.

Those of us responsible for publishing *Affirm* began to feel a sense of relief and hoped that we might soon be able to discontinue *Affirm*; we anticipated a solid and united Missouri re-emerging with its old doctrinal stance clarified.

We had good reasons to believe this; we have men representing historical Missouri in the Synod's key posts; we have the doctrinal resolutions of New Orleans behind us; and building on their base, we have the practical resolutions of Anaheim.

Yet as time passes it appears that the struggle in Missouri is deepening and that the many months to Dallas may prove even more crucial than the months before previous conventions.

We are still confident of God's presence and the joy we have in Christ as well as the ultimate victory!

We are also confident that the many of you who have seen us through the struggle the past five years *Affirm* has been publishing will continue to pray for the success of our common cause, to work for it and to contribute toward it. With a circulation now over 100,000 and with inflationary costs affecting us, you will appreciate that *Affirm* needs your contributions now.

Please help us as generously as you can now and throughout the year! We make our plea in the name of Christ and His pure Gospel.

'No Other Solution'

There are now some despicable, vexatious people who in a very scornful way reproach holy Christendom because so much discord, so many sects, so much error, heresy, and offenses are to be found in it, as if, for that reason, teaching the gospel could properly be deemed false and wrong (inasmuch as Christendom ought to be harmonious and peaceful). These are wise excellent people indeed, since they are able to teach the Holy Spirit how he ought to rule the Christian church! Yes, how much better it would be if the devil did not insist on biting Christ's heel, or if he was made to desist from doing that. Then a quiet, peaceful church could easily become a reality. But since the devil is at present Christ's enemy and never stops creating strife, sects, and rebellions in the church, one is doing violence to the dear church by blaming it for this discord and undisciplined state of affairs. It does not cause them, but on the contrary, is obliged to suffer them. Why do they not also blame us Christians because there is so much bloodshed and discord in the world as a result of our difficulties with the Turks? As the saying goes, 'No one can enjoy peace any longer than his neighbor permits him to do'. The dear church has no choice but to be unpeaceful so long as it does not wish to obey the enemy of its Lord Jesus Christ. How can it help itself? He who bites the heel, the devil, will not rest or leave him in peace who treads upon his head. Likewise, the one who treads upon his head, our Lord, will not tolerate the one who bites his heel. So, go ahead, be smart and wise, and meddle in this strife. I wager you will get the umpire's reward for your trouble—that Christ will damn you and the devil will rend you. Therefore, let matters take their course; do not wedge yourself between the door and the hinges, for you cannot reconcile Christ and Belial (II Cor 6:15). The enmity between them is established too unalterably by an oath. One of the two must at last go down and the other remain. There can be no other solution.

From Luther's Works—Career of the Reformer IV

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The Meanderings Of Missouri's President

IN THE minds of many Missourians the president of their church is not carrying out the resolution of Anaheim (5-02A), which requires him to vacate the office of district presidents who violate the procedures members of Synod have mutually agreed to.

They understand the heavy burden placed on his shoulders by the situation in which the church finds itself; they agonize with him in his difficult hour, but they also feel that the church spoke clearly about its district presidents and that it mandated its chief officer to act—and act wisely, with Christian counsel, but firmly.

These many can appreciate too that technicalities about the ordination of Seminex grads in some instances may cloud the issue.

They can appreciate also his apparent desire to avoid a split church body and they applaud his sincerity and the extreme efforts he has made to hold the church together.

What they cannot understand, even though they give him the every benefit of the doubt, is the logic or the Christianliness of his statement, made to the Council of Presidents in its February meeting, that if just one of the eight district presidents who have defied Missouri agreed to uphold Synod's constitution, he would be willing to set aside "the resolution that could result in the removal of the eight from office."

Who authorized him to set aside synodical action—under any circumstances? Does he or Synod have the last word—when Synod has spoken? What is the logic behind such an offer? How does it conform to obedience to the Christian faith? May seven district presidents violate, as they see fit, the command to "do all things decently and in order" because one has come to accept it?

THESE questions are so self-evident and their answers so clear that one would think the president would find his own statement intolerable. Yet apparently he does not.

At that same meeting he asked "the price of peace" which these eight wanted; one apparent spokesman for them told him: the minimum price is the placing of Seminex grads, the recognition of Seminex as an institution until 3-09 (the New Orleans resolution spelling out Synod's teachings) be declared null and void, and the returning of the Seminex faculty and students to the Sem they revolted against.

If that does not make clear to Missouri's president the depth and breadth of the revolt within Missouri, perhaps nothing will.

Moreover, the president did not remove, as Anaheim had mandated, President Neunaber from office in the Southern Illinois District. Whatever his reasons (he offered lack of time to counsel with Neunaber as well as a technical reason), he tried to persuade, with a serious and strong effort, the District to uphold Synod's position.

The result seems a confused situation. On the plus side, the District in its convention refused to consider a resolution to endorse Seminex graduates for placement in the District and to legitimize Seminex itself. On the minus side, to quote the official news release, "The measure voicing support for

Neunaber's stand of upholding the rights of district congregations to call pastors and ministerial candidates that they feel are qualified passed by a margin of 85 to 70." Missouri's president had urged the District to ask Neunaber to comply with synodical resolutions on this matter.

A FINAL resolution called for mutual confession and absolution, and the synodical president expressed his feeling that the "actions show the District desires to support the Synod and its regulations. . . ."

Moreover, the heavy vote (98-56) of the district to refuse even to consider the Seminex matters leaves open the question of what the ultimate effect of the Southern Illinois convention will prove to be. Someone has called the convention "indecisive;" only time will tell its real meaning.

The latest news release in this ecclesiastical cliff-hanger has Synod's president now announcing that he will not vacate the offices of three more district presidents in an effort ". . . to clear the way for better understanding, more positive action, and improve the climate in the church." The three involved are Jacobs, Jaech, and Meyer.

But four apparently still stand under a cloud: Frincke of the Eastern District, Hecht of the English, Ressimyer of the Atlantic and Riedel of the New England.

Missouri's president explains himself, "Even though the District Presidents involved have not given the stated compliance which was requested of them, nevertheless I am willing to accept that some have not since Anaheim authorized such objectionable ordinations as a willingness to comply *in fact* with the wishes of the synod" and he hopes that he has not misplaced his trust.

One last quote from him. "I would hate to see anyone removed from office, and even more to have to be the instrument through which it was done. Yet, as a constitutional officer of the Synod, I must carry out the resolutions of the church, if I expect others to do the same."

Where does that leave him and Missouri?

ALREADY much of the Anaheim water is over the dam with respect to 5-02A. Apparently, in the president's mind according to the news release, the next deadline is April 22nd, 60 days before the Atlantic District convenes.

However, bewildered these events may leave many of us, we hope and pray that Missouri has now turned a corner. There is reason to believe that Missouri's president will act in the cases of Hecht, Ressimyer, Frincke, and Riedel. We ask God to give him the wisdom and the courage to carry out the Anaheim resolution as he has stated he would.

Ultimately events happen under the power and grace of God; ultimately He and His Word will prevail.

Whatever Missouri's president does, ultimately too the Kingdom will go on and Missouri's men and women, by and large, will act as they have in the past, under grace, faithful to their confessional stance, under leadership which will guide it as God wants it to.

What To Do With The English District?

ACCORDING to some analysts, the most important issue confronting the district conventions, which will be meeting this year, is: What to do with the English District, the only non-geographical district in the Synod?

The Anarchy of the English District

The English District, more than any one other district in Synod, has formally and publicly announced itself to be anarchistic and in revolt against the Synod to which it belongs. It has stated that it is organizing as many congregations and pastors as possible to move out of the Synod. It has encouraged and invited congregations from other districts to leave their district and join the English District so that they can leave the Synod as a group. It has encouraged clusters of minority malcontents in other congregations to do the same. It has invited pastors and members of congregations of other districts to join the English District in order to quit the Synod.

What Should Other Districts Do?

Without even discussing the ethics of such a stance, how now, are the other districts of the Synod going to react to that? There are two schools of thought on this. One says that the other districts ought to encourage this and make it as easy as possible for congregations to join the English District and for the English District to leave the Synod. The other school of thought says that we should make it as difficult as possible for them to leave and put as many road blocks as possible in their way.

Should We Encourage Them to Leave?

The first school reasons that, since the anarchists have become such a serious doctrinal cancer, they are a threat to the very life of orthodoxy within the rest of the body of Synod: and therefore a radical surgical procedure is indicated. We ought to encourage that surgery for the health of the body. The sooner it is performed, the healthier the rest of the body will be.

Or Try to Salvage Them?

The other school reasons that we should try to salvage and heal as much of the body as possible and that we ought to discourage other congregations from joining the English District or even prevent them from doing so, in order to prevent innocent and faithful Christians in those congregations from being led into rash actions, whose consequences they do not fully understand, by liberal or misguided leaders. In other words, we should support those faithful Christians in such congregations, even if they are in a minority, who want to remain faithful to the Word of God and help them contend for the true faith; so that as few congregations as possible may be persuaded to leave our Synod.

That does not mean that the second school is opting for no congregations to leave the Synod. No, some of them are so fully committed to that goal that nothing that anyone can do can prevent that, short of concurring in their false doctrine. But this school believes that we ought to try to keep their numbers to a minimum.

To that end, it is suggested that, when congregations come with a request to the geographical district conventions to be transferred to the English District, such a request should not be approved by the district convention. An action by the district convention to disapprove a transfer can block it.

The Formal Procedure Required

The formal procedure that is required to effect a transfer of a congregation from one district to another involves three steps:

1. *That the local congregation*, according to the provisions of its own constitution, pass a formal resolution to request such a transfer by a large enough majority;

2. *That the geographical district* to which it belongs, by resolution formally votes approval to that request: and that the other district be willing to receive the congregation; and
3. *That the Synod in convention* formally vote approval of the request. All three of these steps should be taken before such transfer is to be effected.

According to precedent, then, it is possible for the geographical district to block the transfer of a congregation from its district to the English District by the simple device of not giving its approval. Then the Synod in convention would not be able to take favorable action on such a request, for it has been customary that both districts involved must be willing to effect such a transfer before the synodical convention will seriously consider granting it. To repeat, according to the By-Laws of Synod, only a synodical convention can finally authorize such a transfer but it must have the approval of both districts before the Synod will give such authorization.

So, this school reasons, let's start at the district level to state our disapproval of the false doctrine that causes these anarchistic maneuvers. The English District administration has stated publicly again and again that, unless the Synod permits the liberals to rule the Synod according to their false teachings, it intends to leave the Synod. Of course, each congregation has the constitutional right to leave the Synod, but the districts do not. Let's not permit them to use the subterfuge of transferring to the English District as a means to that end. If a congregation is determined to leave the Synod, let it be completely honest about that from the beginning and inform all its members that that is the intent, instead of trying to accomplish it by the questionable political maneuver of first transferring the English District as a way of gradually breaking the news to her members.

I am not trying to encourage one or the other schools of thought but merely outlining the possibilities. Each geographical district is going to have to make that decision for itself. And finally, Synod will have to give the authorization in 1977.

Other District Issues

That, of course, is not the only important issue to come before the district conventions this year. Other actions that district conventions could effect are such things as:

1. *Resolutions of censure* for recalcitrant district presidents, who are violating their vows and the trust which Synod has placed in them;
2. *Resolutions upholding Synod's doctrinal position*;
3. *Election of orthodox officials* to various boards and committees which come up for election in this off-year. This is an off-year because the major offices of president, vice presidents, etc. are not up for election this year.

But again, the main issue will probably be this: What to do with those congregations who want to transfer to the English District as a step toward leaving the Synod. At least, every one ought to be clear that this is the goal of the majority of officials in the English District and that this is probably the goal of those congregations that wish to transfer to it.

The Rev. Marcus Lang, Pastor
St. James Lutheran Church
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Resolution 3-09: The Lion in the Path

“**W**HEREFORE putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor; for we are members one of another.” So Paul exhorts the Ephesian Christians, if unity and peace are to prevail among them. (Ephesians 4, 25)

This is reminiscent of a well-turned passage in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, as Polonius exhorts his son, Laertes:—“This above all,—to thine own self be true; and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man.” (I, 3)

“There's been a breakdown of basic honesty,” states one of Missouri's former vice presidents, whose ministry was spent almost entirely in the St. Louis area, and his point of reference was to the former “faculty majority.”

Both sides in Missouri's painful conflict acknowledge that doctrinal differences exist. The Synod at New Orleans (1973) finally pinpointed some of the main ones. It did so in Resolution 3-09. In that resolution the delegates voiced their decisive disapproval of what had been going on for too long a time in the Synod. On matters of doctrine Missouri had always stood for consensus, for oneness, even as God had given it in His Word. But now the authority of the Scriptural Word was itself under assault. By their vote the delegates said, “No more of this.” God's Word and God's truth must not be made a matter of debate, as though error can have equal standing with truth, secular opinion with Scriptural truth, the lies of Belial with the truth of Christ.

But the plot against Missouri's integrity was very carefully laid. The arguments as a matter of fact were as old as liberalism itself, a century-and-a-half; but the principals (Missouri's own theological leaders) in the intrigue were new. Gone was the concern to be true to the heritage which their Lutheran forebears had left them (the *consensus historicus Lutheranism*). In fact there was embarrassment. Now there was a mad scrambling to dissociate themselves from the old position which held that the Holy Scriptures were in fact the inspired Word of God, authoritative, inerrant. That needed to be demythologized. With the same breath with which they vowed loyalty to Article II of Synod's Constitution, they disavowed the inviolable authority of what by now had become to them a *fallible* Bible.

THE charade had been going on for at least a dozen years before New Orleans cried, “Halt!”—this position “cannot be tolerated in the church, much less be excused and defended.”

But untruth plies a devious course. If New Orleans R 3-09 was responsible for taking the wind out of their sails, then R 3-09 must go. The peddlers of the doctrinal errors targeted by R 3-09 (it is true, R 3-09's focus was on false doctrinal *positions* and not on the identity of persons) had boldly disclaimed that this resolution applied to them in any way. Testimonies of personal faith supposedly were to be sufficient answer to satisfy a concerned church. The Synod pleaded for straightforward answers. If Tietjen and the “faculty majority” disavowed the charges in R 3-09, then let there be an accounting of the documents that originated with them and which belied their claim of innocence.

Specifically, the New Orleans convention zeroed in on three points:

- 1) The authority of Holy Scriptures as the only norm by which all teachings and teachers must be judged;
- 2) Gospel-reductionism (Gospelism), in its attack on Scripture's content at given points, threatening eventually the Gospel itself; and
- 3) An undermining or obfuscating of the teaching concerning the Third use of the Law.

AFTER all, it was the “faculty majority” that had raised a storm through their own statements and documents, most notable among which was “Faithful to Our Calling. Faithful to

Our Lord, Part I.” They described and defended their positions as “responsibly taken.” But then, quite irresponsibly—for all the delegates at New Orleans to witness—they refused to give an account of the “positions responsibly taken.” The delegates could not miss what was happening; it was more than hedging, more than fudging.

R 3-09 had laid Synod's accusing finger on the neuralgic points. The issue was doctrinal. This is something that members of Synod must not forget in the confusion that now prevails on policy matters, of whether the Synod can rightly expect its district presidents to conform to the Bylaws. Nor ought the eight district presidents forget it either. The division in Synod is a doctrinal matter. It requires a doctrinal solution—consensus and unity under the Word!

R 3-09 has been the burr under the saddle for the Seminex crowd on the long, rough ride (one has to admire the spirit of self-sacrifice of the zealots!) into self-imposed “exile” along the way to “ELIM.” Understandably R 3-09 continues to rankle and chafe the elite corps of dissidents. They had dedicated themselves, they thought, to leading the Synod beyond its narrow horizons into new dimensions of ecumenical involvement and to shaping Synod's theology in a way that would be more conformable and comfortable with Missouri's new-found “friends” who were avowedly less Confessional and less intent on remaining Lutheran Christians according to the intent, meaning, and spirit of the Confessions.

Seminex, ELIM, and the eight district presidents, who have together spearheaded Synod's present para-Constitutional crisis (where everybody virtually does as he pleases, almost anarchy), saw just one snag or road block—R 3-09—in their way, one obstacle preventing them from getting the Synod on its knees, forcing the church body which it had infiltrated with neo-liberalism to beg their forgiveness for harm done. So, let's concentrate on R 3-09, was the word that went out. There's a lion in the path. Shoot'm down!

LIKE injured swans, with wings clipped but necks still drawn high, the Seminex group simply decries Synod's efforts to restore God-pleasing unity. It deplores as demeaning Anaheim's appeal to them in Resolution 3-03A to meet individually with an interview committee to clear themselves of the charges leveled in New Orleans R 3-09. The Anaheim resolution, they say, was designed to break up their united stand; it left them under a cloud; and justified the New Orleans' convention action. They simply demurred to cooperate in any way with the interview committee. They expressed dismay, even shock, that the interview committee itself would stoop to being partners to such a scheme, “asking brothers to clear themselves when no one comes forward even to press charges against them, much less prove the charges.” Instead they now are bold and brazen to suggest that the “people in Synod have been clamoring for dialogue,” and that this would be the “more excellent way.” Brazen, we say, because the dialoguing *had* gone on for almost 15 years, and the New Orleans action came in direct response to the irresponsible, audacious, and overt refusal of the “injured swans” to accept *any* brotherly admonition.

No one dismissed them from their called positions—until they walked off, thumbed their noses at Synod and its appeals to honor the divine calls under which they were covenanted, and to return to their posts. They simply refused. By their own overt actions they underscored the fact that they were as a matter of

(Continued on Page 8)

The Three Trouble Spots

THE doctrinal controversy in our Synod strikes at the very vitals of the church, namely, the nature and authority of Scripture. The source, going back at least twenty years, lay in the gradual seminary infiltration of a liberal method of Biblical interpretation. The bad training of future pastors has been corrected through major and painful changes in both seminary faculty and supervision. That Synod's two seminaries are now in doctrinal harmony with Synod's position is something for which we should daily thank God.

But this doctrinal controversy, as others in church history, has many ramifications and shows up at various places in the life of the church.

Three major trouble spots at present are those district presidents who continue to place in Missouri Synod congregations men who are not certified for the LCMS ministry, the former faculty majority of the St. Louis Seminary, and students of the breakaway Seminex operation. Obviously, the three are closely related.

Some district presidents, reflecting a willingness to allow doctrinal permissiveness and deviations heretofore never tolerated in our Synod, defend their approval of Seminex pastoral candidates on the basis of the so-called advisory character of Synod. Indeed, in the internal affairs of a congregation, Synod is only advisory. That kind of parish autonomy is not under question nor is it in danger today.

BUT in the ordination authorization of uncertified men, we are not dealing only with the fact that the Constitution and By-Laws are knowingly broken, as serious as that is. But even more significantly, we are dealing with the sad fact that these pastoral candidates have chosen to take their theological training at a school not affiliated with the Missouri Synod and under professors whose doctrinal stance was emphatically and specifically condemned by Synod in 1973. False doctrine is the issue!

That kind of "autonomy" is not available to district presidents nor to Missouri Synod congregations. It is forbidden by Scripture, it is contrary to our constitution, and it violates the basic concept of unity that lies in the very word "synod." It is nonsense for someone to say, "I share the doctrinal position of the Missouri Synod, I want to be a member of that Synod, and as an officer of that Synod I have sworn loyalty to it. But I think it is all right that congregations have pastors whose doctrinal position does not agree with that of the Missouri Synod."

It would have been easy and proper for Synod at Anaheim to say to the rebellious district presidents, "You have said that you will not comply with the synodical regulations you are sworn to uphold and therefore you are herewith removed from office."

IT would have been easy and accurate for Synod to say that St. Louis Seminary faculty members violated their calls by the walkout; that they gambled and lost on a well-organized power play attempt to force the seminary Board of Control to capitulate; that there was appalling arrogance in their ultimatum to the Board of Control at its February 17, 1974 meeting which gave the Board *one day* to reinstate the seminary president and meet three other demands or else, on February 19, they would no longer be teaching "under your auspices nor at the customary location."

It would have been equally easy and accurate for Synod to say that there seems to be something phony about a student-body statement on January 21, 1974 (the day after the president's temporary suspension) claiming that they could not attend classes as long as the professors were under the false doctrine charges by Synod in July 1973, when those students found themselves well able to study under those same professors from September, 1973, until January 21, 1974.

It would have been easy for Synod to say, "We have had it with you rebels."

Yet, in an amazing and God-given tolerance and patience Synod at Anaheim had a loving word for all three groups.

TO the district presidents Synod said, "Please think it over. We are asking the synodical president to deal pastorally with you. Please reach a decision before your next district convention."

To the professors Synod said, "We take at face value your repeated statement that you want to get out from under the cloud of false doctrine charges that do not name you individually. You and your students have said repeatedly that you wish to be cleared or be found guilty. That request was reasonable, so we will make arrangements for a 5-man committee of fair and honorable men to review your doctrinal position with you on the individual basis you have asked for."

To the students Synod said, "Perhaps you have had second thoughts about your rash rebellion. We are making it the specific function of the synodical colloquy board to meet with you at your request in order to discuss your doctrinal stand. It is our prayer that you will be found qualified for the ministry of our church."

Now, what has been the result of this fair and loving approach by Synod to the problem areas of students, professors, and district presidents?

A few students have been interviewed and certified for the ministry, and for this we thank God. But the majority have refused to walk through the door that Synod opened for them.

To a man, the professors who repeatedly complained about being "under a cloud" have rejected the interview process provided by Synod in response to their request.

The illegitimate ordination of Seminex graduates by some district presidents has continued.

So, it finally comes down to this. Synod is a voluntary association of free people who have lovingly covenanted together in doctrinal agreement for the furtherance of God's Kingdom. They have agreed to walk together. When some, after long and patient discussion, find that they really cannot any longer walk together with us, then honesty and integrity—theirs and ours—require that they walk elsewhere.

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

The Editorial Group

The Rev. William T. Eggers
Richard G. Korthals
The Rev. Ewald J. Otto
Dr. Robert Preus

On The News Front

MUCH has been made of the number of congregations which have of late transferred to the English District. In reading these reports one can easily get the impression that large numbers of congregations want to transfer in and none want to leave, simply because we do not hear of the latter taking place. This, however, is not the case. There are congregations who want to transfer to a geographical district, but the affected district president is encouraging them to follow the Synodical Handbook procedures. A change from one district to another can only take place after permission is received from Synod, given at a regular convention. This is as it should be, since it is the Synod which establishes districts and district boundaries. When the English District states that they are accepting congregations at the present time, they are violating the covenant or agreement under which we operate. To do this is unethical. The other presidents who have received similar requests have listened to their conscience and have done the ethical thing. They have told congregations to try to work things out and wait until the Dallas convention, at which time they can memorialize the Synod, requesting the change. Of course, all this would change if the English District should leave Synod, for this would, in effect, dissolve the district, and those congregations who would not be in agreement would automatically become members of the district in which they reside. In the meantime, this will explain why you will not hear of geographical districts accepting congregations, even though a number of requests have been received.

* * *

IT is interesting that those with liberal leanings are now saying what conservatives have been stating for years: the issue is doctrinal and not political; it is a struggle about what the Bible says and means.

Martin Marty, a church historian who is also a member of Missouri's clergy, stated in an interview with the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* that he does not think it possible to take "a middle of the road" stance in the doctrinal struggle which now troubles Missouri . . . "there can't be a middle between two positions, one of which can simply be summarized as 'there's room for both of us,' and the other side (saying) there is not room. I cannot see where there is a tactical middle."

The story went on to state that " 'moderates' will leave the Synod to join a 'temporary holding Church, to assure that the tradition has continuity.' At that point, he said, 'there is no question that it would move to the other two (major) Lutheran groups.' "

* * *

THE *Des Moines Tribune* last January quoted Dr. Tietjen,

The problem would be there if I were president, or if someone like me had been president. I was in the way. The name of the game was control of the synod and of the seminary.

It later continued with the following analysis of Missouri's struggle, apparently gained from a speech Tietjen made in Des Moines.

The differences within the Missouri Synod predate Tietjen's becoming president of Concordia in 1969. He feels this was one of the reasons he was involuntarily thrust into the center of the controversy.

The doctrinal differences, he said, have existed here since the 1950's and may even have their roots in the 1940's, when Missouri Synod Lutherans began pondering their relationship to other Lutherans and other Christians.

In simplest terms, the dispute revolves around the question of how literally the Bible is to be taken—an issue that has confronted every church attempting to relate Biblical knowledge to modern historical and scientific understanding.

On the News Front: (Continued from page 5)

AFFIRM has repeatedly congratulated the many local publications, usually distributed on a district level, which support the conservative cause of Missouri. Below you will find a list of some or most of these publications. If *Affirm's* list is incomplete, please write; *Affirm* would like, in its next issue, to carry the essential information about any other similar publications.

<i>The Faithful Messenger</i>	Rev. Victor A. Kurz 3247 Smiley Road Columbus, Ohio 43220
<i>Cincinnati Concerns</i>	Rev. Eric Schuk 968 Fashion Avenue Cincinnati, Ohio 45238
<i>Southern Concerns</i>	Mr. G. R. Murphy Salem Lutheran 418 Fourth Street Gretna, Louisiana 70053
<i>California Concerns</i>	Mr. Ed A. Weise 14447 Juniper Street San Leandro, California 94579
<i>The Northern Light</i>	Rev. David Anderson 1000 Memorial Drive Crookston, Minnesota 56716
<i>DCP Trumpet</i>	Rev. Tom Baker 1405 Anna University City, Missouri 63130
<i>Colorado Laymen's Newsletter</i>	Mr. Ray Joeckel 2210 Lincoln Center Building Denver, Colorado 80202
<i>The Evangelical Lutheran</i>	P.O. Box 1462 Orange, California 92668
<i>Oklahoma Evangel</i>	Mr. A. H. Turner R. R. #2 Kingfisher, Oklahoma 73750
<i>Calling All Loyal Lutherans</i>	R. R. #1 Decatur, Indiana 46733
<i>The Lay Voice of Nebraska</i>	Mr. Al Achterberg P.O. Box 527 Holdrege, Nebraska 68949
<i>Lutherans United for Synod</i>	L. U. F. S. Box 28253 St. Louis, Missouri 63132

Once again, the church's deep appreciation for spreading the essential news about events in Missouri and for helping to strengthen the souls of many of the faithful in Christ!

* * *

(Continued on Page 7)

Contributions

With their generous support many of its friends have made the publication of *Affirm* possible.

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Copies Available

Congregations and other groups may order copies of *Affirm* at the bulk rate of \$4.00 per hundred. This price includes postage and handling. Single copies are 10 cents each.

On the News Front: (Continued from page 6)

THE ATS Commission on Accrediting removed the probation which it has imposed on Concordia Sem, St. Louis, some time ago. In taking this action, the visiting team stated:

On the academic community: "We are satisfied that the faculty constitutes a vigorous community of faith and learning. Our conversations with individual faculty members uniformly indicated that the faculty are happy to be at Concordia, are satisfied with the conditions under which they work, respect their colleagues and administrators, and feel a part of a team engaged together in the enterprise of theological education. They believe they are respected and valued by the Board of Control and the administration, and they value the relationships obtaining among themselves and with students. . . . Scars from the events of early 1974 are remarkably absent . . . What we found in visiting among the faculty was confirmed by student perceptions of the faculty."

On academic freedom: "Our conclusion is that faculty and students do examine positions other than those deemed acceptable to the Synod, and that, in that sense, academic freedom is present and operative."

* * *

THE interview committee, appointed to determine if former faculty members of the Sem held sound doctrines, has asked to be terminated since the faculty members declined to be interviewed. In a letter to each of these former faculty members the committee stated:

We are persuaded that the interview process recommended by the Anaheim convention in Resolution 3-03A, despite possible shortcomings, by God's grace could have served as a ministry of healing in the church.

In all kindness and candor, we cannot accept your implication that we have prejudged you, or that the interview process would have been an act "contrary to the Word and will of God, and a clear disservice to His church," as you have said.

Since you have felt constrained to decline the invitation of our committee to participate in the interviews, we feel that any further efforts on our part would be officious and would exceed the assignment given to our committee by the Synod.

* * *

MISSOURI'S Committee to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the founding of the United States offers a theme and symbol "Life and Liberty through Christ," tracts, other materials, suggests four days of the year for special services, has arranged for a speaker's bureau, edited various Bible materials and has prepared a list of suggested readings. Additional and more detailed information can be obtained from the Committee by writing it at 801 DeMun Avenue, St. Louis, Mo. 63105.

Affirm's Mailing List

If you have friends to whom you want *Affirm* sent, please inform us. We will be happy to place them on our mailing list.

To comply with postal mailing regulations *AFFIRM'S* mailing list is arranged numerically according to Zip Code Number.

Therefore, it would be helpful to us if names were **ARRANGED NUMERICALLY ACCORDING TO ZIP CODE NUMBERS, AND ALPHABETICALLY UNDER EACH ZIP CODE**. This will enable us to check easily to determine if the names submitted are already on our mailing list, and eliminate duplicate mailings.

It would also be helpful if names and addresses were printed clearly or typewritten.

Affirm

Affirm, sponsored by Balance Inc., is published monthly or more frequently by a group of its members concerned about theological and related developments in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

All correspondence, editorial material, contributions, and communications about subscriptions should be addressed to:

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4040 West Fond du Lac Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216

We Need Your Help!

As events in Missouri indicate — some of them summarized on these pages—Missouri may be passing through her most crucial and darkest hour.

Most of us probably thought that the sound Anaheim resolutions for dealing on a practical level with our difficulties would shift the scene of the struggle to the district and congregational level, where it would be resolved within a year or so at the outside.

Those of us responsible for publishing *Affirm* began to feel a sense of relief and hoped that we might soon be able to discontinue *Affirm*; we anticipated a solid and united Missouri re-emerging with its old doctrinal stance clarified.

We had good reasons to believe this; we have men representing historical Missouri in the Synod's key posts; we have the doctrinal resolutions of New Orleans behind us; and building on their base, we have the practical resolutions of Anaheim.

Yet as time passes it appears that the struggle in Missouri is deepening and that the many months to Dallas may prove even more crucial than the months before previous conventions.

We are still confident of God's presence and the joy we have in Christ as well as the ultimate victory!

We are also confident that the many of you who have seen us through the struggle the past five years *Affirm* has been publishing will continue to pray for the success of our common cause, to work for it and to contribute toward it. With a circulation now over 100,000 and with inflationary costs affecting us, you will appreciate that *Affirm* needs your contributions now.

Please help us as generously as you can now and throughout the year! We make our plea in the name of Christ and His pure Gospel.

R 3-09

(Continued From Page 3)

fact at odds *doctrinally* with their church, as New Orleans had charged. Had they in fact been innocent of the doctrinal deviations specified in R 3-09, then common sense and Christian integrity dictated, in fact demanded, that they stay on their jobs and prove their case protected as they were by Synod's Constitutional channels.

The eight district presidents were tools—wittingly or unwittingly—for the Seminex intrigue. They, too, hope that by keeping a solid phalanx they can drive the Synod to its knees and justify themselves. They insist, in spite of all the evidence to the contrary (as a matter of fact, they like vice president Gerken of the Missouri District, who "exonerated" Tietjen of any false doctrine, simply refuse to acknowledge—quite inconsistently—that false doctrine is the issue and harp rather on "church politics"), that it is:—

- 1) a scandal to label faithful teachers as unfaithful;
- 2) wrong to require Seminex graduates to submit to an interview process before placement, because this would offend their consciences; and
- 3) contrary to a congregation's autonomy to expect it or require it to conform to synodical policy as regards the certification of candidates.

So, they join the clamor: Synod's president must overturn and declare R 3-09 to be a mistake!

YET the facts are, as the documents penned by Seminex' own "exiles" verify, that there's been a breakdown of basic honesty. No one has ever doubted that the Seminex group lacks audacity. Nor can anyone now claim that they are not skilled at playing fast and loose with the facts.

R 3-09 *was* and *is* Synod's plea for integrity, uprightness and truth, for people who claim a partnership in Synod, to be true to themselves: and then it will follow as night follows day that they will also find it impossible to be false to their fellow Missourians.

That is the only way to unity and concord. "Let every one speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another," is the apostolic word that fits for this hour in Missouri's life and history.

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor. 4:13

Four District Presidents Removed

THE climax of Missouri's long internal struggle about the control of Synod took place on Friday, April 2.

On that day Missouri's President, Dr. J. A. O. Preus, removed from office four dissident District Presidents, the Reverends R. Ressmeyer of the Atlantic District, H. Frincke of the Eastern District, R. Riedel of the New England District, and H. Hecht of the English District.

The issue, so ably stated in Resolution 3-09 of the New Orleans convention, was a doctrinal issue which affected every teaching of the Bible: how the Word of God is to be interpreted.

Vacating the offices of these four men should, under God, start closing out a struggle which has increasingly troubled Missouri for nearly two decades.

It will enable a unified church body to devote its energies fully to the great mission task which the Lord made its responsibility. It will also permit Missouri's members to express more fully the positives and joys of their faith and shed the strains of the tension which an era of struggle laid upon them.

Missouri's president acted under a resolution of the Anaheim convention which directed him to vacate the office of any district president who ordained graduates of Seminex, the breakaway seminary which left the St. Louis campus in order to establish its own independent school.

The Preus action came after many months during which he personally made last efforts to avert the break. Prior to Anaheim reconciliation and a return to Biblical doctrine by those with liberal leanings had been sought by the conservatives in scores of meetings, held under various sponsorships. No progress had been made.

THE Anaheim resolution reflected the futility of continuing talks which were not effective. The April 2 action of Preus culminated a series of discussions between the President and these District Presidents.

On Thursday afternoon, according to reports, all eight of the dissident district men met with Synod's Board of Directors. On Friday morning the four again met with Preus as a group and individually. Later that morning he removed them from office.

Since the districts of Missouri are not independent church bodies, but the creation of Synod, and since the property of the district is legally Synod's property, Missouri's Board of Directors took the legal actions necessary to protect Synod's interests in these four districts and immediately notified other officials in these districts of the constraints placed upon them by the situation.

Affirm is deeply distressed that the Preus action had to take place; it presented the issues during its five year publication history with the hope that, under grace, its pages might be a reconciling force.

It understands the President's feelings, that he is "very anguished at having to do this." Though he may understand its necessity under the will of God, no conservative rejoices in the breakup of his church body.

The Rev. John Tietjen said that Preus had "set in motion an unstoppable, irretrievable series of events that will lead to the eventual breakup of Synod."

There seems to be a consensus among Missouri's leaders on both sides of the issue that such a split has now become inevitable.

DISTRESSING months lie ahead as all the implications and the settlement of the practical issues involved unfold themselves. Individuals will have to make decisions about their course of action as will congregations and even portions of districts.

Preus said hopefully, "I don't anticipate there will be as much furor over this as some would have expected or hoped."

May that prove true!

Saddening though the event is, it has its joyful aspects. God has blessed Missouri with leaders who stood firm in her great crisis and slowly, as they were able, led the church back to her foundations in God's Word.

It is a unique history; no other church body of modern times which has started down the liberal path has been able to reverse that trend and recover its conservative position.

Thank God for His blessing on Missouri!

Thank Him for having preserved among us the purity of doctrine and faithful adherence to the Sacraments which have been the strength of generations of Missourians as well as their great comfort and hope!

But history still lies ahead of Missouri.

A part of that history in our turbulent times must be an intelligent response to all which is happening around us — all the discoveries men are making — to help protect, by grace, other Missourians from being misled by modern temptations.

A second thrust must be to put the Lord's accent on the evangelizing of the world!

A third thrust must be to keep those schools which have good faculties now to stand firm in the years ahead and to bring other Missouri's schools into the circle of doctrinal agreement which Missouri is again becoming.

But always and above all, we must praise God for what He has again given us and ask Him to continue to bless us!

Evangelism: His Loving Command

THEY were both strangers to the small village. No one had seen them before. They stayed only long enough to introduce themselves; to be sincerely friendly; to make friends and then to leave. It was but a few weeks later and the same two returned. This time they asked questions: "Are you satisfied with your life here? Isn't your farm too small? Aren't prices too high? Who owns the land?" They left and behind them were sown the seeds of dissatisfaction.

There was a third visit. The same two. One always did the talking while the other listened. During their second visit they had only raised questions, this time the questions were answered: "We realize how hard life is for you. We have a plan. We will help you. We can offer more land. Prices will go down. Only we can help you." Then they left. The villagers awaited the fourth visit. They came. They talked about armed revolution. "Eliminate the property owners. Eliminate the rich. Eliminate all superstition: churches, holy books, and religion." They brought guns.

This particular incident took place in the Philippine Islands. It is continuing and will continue until all of the population of that country is confronted by these Marxist-missionaries.

What has just been described is a basic technique of the Communists everywhere as they witness their ideology. It involves the idea of a trainer and a trainee. The trainer does all of the speaking with the trainee listening and watching the technique. Once the trainee learns the methodology he becomes a trainer and a trainee is assigned to him. This continues and continues: multiplying, adding, reaching, and conquering.

It is not necessary to point out the tremendous results of such a campaign of witnessing for their cause but perhaps, it is needful to express that the essential procedure (minus the guns, talk of armed revolution, etc.) was taken from the Holy Bible! For what we are observing in their confrontation is the evangelism strategy used by the Lord as written in Luke 10:1,3 ff.:

After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before His face into every city and place, wither He Himself would come. Therefore, said He unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; pray ye therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth laborers into His harvest.

Many Christians of today are using this trainer-trainee (teams of twos) as a valid method of evangelizing. However, there are also other ways in which evangelism (presenting the Savior, Jesus Christ to the unbeliever) can be accomplished: individual spontaneous witnessing, group proclamation, special worship services, the use of an underlined Bible, distribution of tracts, and various organizational plans for covering a neighborhood, a suburb, an ethnic group, an office building, or wherever a soul is without Christ.

To be truly Biblical and to be truly effective, however, (no matter what method of out-reach is employed) a congregation should make certain that two things are stressed: 1. the Biblical-salvation-message and 2. the teaching of technique.

The Biblical-Salvation-Message

And said unto them, This is written and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sin should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (Luke 24:46, 47).

It is unmistakably clear that we are to proclaim the good news of the forgiveness of our sins: unearned, undeserved, unmerited; given us through faith in Christ's suffering, dying on Calvary and in His resurrection on Easter Sunday! For the sake of that one divine-man Jesus Christ, God will not allow our sins to separate us from Him! For the sake of that one divine-man

Jesus Christ, His blood obliterates all our guilt! For the sake of that one divine-man Jesus Christ, what we could not obtain by human works, by human suffering, and dying, He obtained by divine works, and by His divine suffering and death!

It was just this Gospel-good news that rings like music throughout the primitive Church! This is why the New Testament is filled with superlatives! This was the power that overcame the Roman Empire! This was the reason for the early Christians' love, their unity, and their peace! This was the reason for their risking everything to reach all with joyous celebration of "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Romans 3:23). Without this Biblical-salvation-message, all evangelism proclamation is counterfeit.

The Teaching of Technique

The true Biblical salvation message has always been taught within our congregations; that has not been our problem. The difficulty has arisen because to be effective, the message requires messengers. We are not making reference to the need of more pastors, but rather, that men, women, young people, and even children accept the challenge that they too are to be messengers of the message of salvation! This is not only a problem but in the case of many, it is a sin. Let me illustrate by calling it: The Sin of the Great Silence in our Lives. We are so willing to give Jesus Christ a place in our churches: on the altar, in the stained glass windows, or within the hymnbook. We are so willing to give Jesus Christ a place in our liturgy or in our private home-devotions but He wants more than that! He wants to be told and told, again and again. If we think that Jesus is good enough for our wall plaques, for our Youth and Guild meetings, then He is good enough for the next door neighbor and for the one who rides to work with us. If Jesus is good enough for the pictures in our home and the words from our pulpit then He is good enough for "the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick maker!"

It is our opinion that most lay people fail to witness not because of apathy or unwillingness but simply because they want to know the right thing to say in the right way. Only a very few people can easily express the Christian faith without fear or hesitation without having had the benefit of previous training. The greater majority require indoctrination in evangelistic witnessing. Jesus Christ wants to be told and people do want to know just how to go about the telling, hence, the popularity of the trainer and the trainee methodology. Evangelistic personal witnessing should require the learning of technique and orientation.

Our Lutheran Church Missouri Synod has made giant steps during the past ten years in making the techniques of evangelism available. The Evangelism Department in St. Louis has a board of five members plus a full-time staff of two officials with a host of materials: books, tracts, Bible studies, brochures, manuals, visual aids, programs, and the like. All of these helps were prepared so that the congregation is able to organize, train, and effectively carry out an evangelistic out-reach program for all ages and for all purposes: to the atheist, the agnostic, the senior citizen, the ethnic group, the intellectual, as well as the man on the street. Each District has evangelism boards, committees, and either an evangelism director or trained pastors and laymen who will go to a church and establish programs to develop "evangelists" within its midst. Each Circuit and usually each local conference too, have appointees who specialize in assisting local parishes in the teaching of technique. Our Seminaries offer a variety of courses which will equip the future pastors both to evangelize and to train others to become messengers of the message. Some of the required and elective

(Continued on Page 6)

The ALC Issue — Still Unresolved

IN 1969 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod declared fellowship with The American Lutheran Church (ALC). The 1969 Denver Convention of the Missouri Synod is still considered the watershed convention because the conservative voice of the church began to express itself in a way that the church body had not known for years. All of the events that happened in 1971, 1973, and 1975 have flowed out of the change of direction in 1969. The repercussions of Denver are still being felt in the Missouri Synod today and the final echoes have still not been heard. Denver meant that the Missouri Synod would again listen to the voice of its founding fathers.

The great anomaly of the 1969 convention at Denver was that the Missouri Synod declared fellowship with the ALC. The close vote at the convention indicated that the Missouri Synod as a federation of congregations was not sold on the fellowship question. It also indicated that there was confusion in the minds of many of the delegates as well as with the rank and file back in the congregations on what fellowship entailed. Since its very beginnings in the 19th century, the Missouri Synod had doctrinal discussions with some of the church bodies now incorporated into the ALC.

The chief issue separating those groups one hundred years ago were questions like "Did God choose man for salvation because God knew man would believe?" or "Did God choose man for salvation as a pure act of His grace?" The forerunner of The American Lutheran Church answered "Yes" to the first question and the Missouri Synod answered "Yes" to the second question. Important as the answer to these questions were one hundred or maybe even fifty years ago, other questions have come since that time that are considered just as critical. Even since 1969 yet more issues separating Missouri Synod theology from ALC theology have developed.

SHORTLY after the Missouri Synod declared fellowship with the ALC, the ALC began allowing women to become pastors. This was clearly against what St. Paul had written in First Corinthians and First Timothy. The Missouri Synod besought the ALC to reevaluate its decision to permit women to become ordained pastors. The ALC did not budge. Since 1969 the ALC also declared fellowship with the Lutheran Church in America, a church body that has been tolerant of doctrinal aberrations since its parent bodies were founded in the 18th century.

The Biblical and old church concept that fellowship between church bodies could only be established where there was not only agreement in doctrine but also agreement and cooperation among partner churches was swept aside. The unilateral declaration of fellowship declared by the ALC without the agreement of the Missouri Synod was not only against the rules of common courtesy but a gross disregard of the alleged fellowship that the ALC had with Missouri. Fellowship between the ALC and the Missouri Synod clearly did not meet the standards known in the Bible and the ancient church.

The 1969 decision of the Missouri Synod allowed individual congregations the right to decide if they would practice fellowship with the ALC. This kind of arrangement known as selective fellowship was simply unheard of in Biblical times. It indicated that the Missouri Synod congregations were not really in doctrinal agreement among themselves. This harsh opinion had proven correct in the seven intervening years. These years have shown that the 'moderate' faction in the Missouri Synod does in fact have more in common with the ALC than with the traditional Missouri Synod position.

BOTH the 'moderate' faction and the ALC agree that women should be ordained as pastors, that there are errors in the Bible,

that methods questioning the historical quality of the Bible are permissible, that there should be a sharing of the Lord's Supper with non-Lutherans and that abortion is permissible. There are really no basic disagreements between the positions of the 'moderate' faction in the Missouri Synod and the ALC. Even before and now after Denver the Missouri Synod has condemned various positions now recognized as tolerated by the 'moderate' position. These rejections of the 'moderate' position apply equally to the position of the ALC. The Missouri Synod can as little tolerate these unscriptural positions in its own midst as it can in a church body with whom it has fellowship.

Since 1969 the Missouri Synod has been occupied in getting its own doctrinal house in order. It did not have time to scrutinize the unsettled issues of the ALC fellowship. The one issue, the ordination of women pastors, on which the Missouri Synod did speak to the ALC, was rejected offhand. Not only did it declare fellowship with the more doctrinally tolerant Lutheran Church in America, but together with that church body arranged a scheme for their members to receive the Lord's Supper at non-Lutheran altars. Non-Lutherans would be welcomed at their altars.

The ALC has also expressed sympathy in many ways with the Missouri Synod moderates. Quite blatant was the attendance of the ALC president at the ordination of Seminex graduates. Such ordinations are not recognized by the Missouri Synod. The ALC is also making arrangements for 'moderate' congregations to join its membership. The ALC would rather fellowship with the 'moderates' in the Missouri Synod and has said quite clearly on many occasions that it does not really like or want to listen to the Missouri Synod's confessional and conservative positions and statements. The time has finally come for the Missouri Synod to declare publicly what is already a fact, that fellowship between it and the ALC is non-existent. The ALC relishes its fellowship with the more doctrinally tolerant Lutheran Church in America and a widening fellowship with other Protestant bodies. In fact there is hardly any real difference between the ALC and the Lutheran Church in America. The Missouri Synod only has to realize that it has no part in ecumenical dreams of the ALC.

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Editorial Policy

While the articles in *Affirm* with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

The Editorial Group

The Rev. William T. Eggers
Richard G. Korthals
The Rev. Ewald J. Otto
Dr. Robert Preus

A Christian View of the Bicentennial

The author of this article is indebted to Dr. Kenneth Heinitz, Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Illinois, for some thoughts from his longer article, "The Christian in a Bicentennial Year," which appeared in the January 1976 issue of "The Cresset."

THE Lutheran Church, like other religious groups, was transplanted to American soil by early emigrants, with traces of those early plantings reaching back 100 years before the founding of our nation. The earliest Lutheran congregations (Dutch, Scandinavian, German) were established on Manhattan Island in 1623. The first Lutheran pastor ordained on American soil was Justus Falckner on November 23, 1703, in Philadelphia.

All of which is to say that strong Lutheran threads are woven into the fabric of American history. In 1976 Lutherans are thinking of themselves not only as celebrants in a bicentennial year, but also as participants in 200 years of United States history.

Blessed we have been! As they came to this country, Lutherans shared in the blessings of the land. They settled on the easily available acres, rich with amazing fertility, which stretched from the mountains to the prairies; they reaped the harvest of the great forests; they benefitted from its natural resources and mined its precious metals. They shared in the adventure of establishing the republic and a form of government which provided for civil and religious liberty. They voted in town meetings and worshipped God according to the dictates of their conscience.

But, like Abraham of old, Lutherans were blessed to be a blessing. Their contributions to our country have been many. They tilled the soil, joined in opening new territories, helped build the railroads, worked in the factories, and wrote our laws. God fearing folk, they contributed stability to their communities, built churches, established congregations, and shared the Gospel light with those sitting in darkness.

BUT an honest appraisal of our 200 years shows that there was not all sweetness and light. We have had our seamy side too, and there are attitudes and incidents in our history of which we are less than proud. We took land away from the Indians who were here before we came, we mistreated the Blacks, abused the land, and wasted its resources. We took our blessings for granted. We acted as if the land was there for the taking, instead of viewing it as a loan from God for which we, as stewards, must give account.

Although Americans have covered the city street corners and dotted the countryside with churches, there has also been among us a massive irreligiousness. The God we worship on Sunday morning has been asked not to interfere in our Monday lives. The flesh often has been far ahead of the spirit. Many churches are little more than social clubs and fail to function as the conscience of the nation. The trumpet frequently has given an uncertain sound. The "pursuit of happiness," written into the Declaration of Independence by Thomas Jefferson, has become an idol to many under the false assumption that we all are entitled to be happy all of the time. In short, our history is marred by sins against God, against people, and against the land.

In the face of all that, ought we to celebrate at all? Some think not as they indulge in an almost paranoid parade of what has

been wrong. Others, though also caught between guilt and celebration, are less drastic and have suggested that we tone down the bicentennial festivities. For example, an article in the March 1975 *New Yorker*, looking ahead to the bicentennial year, suggested that we "Sing 'Happy Birthday' with feeling—but softly—very softly."

Lutherans, it seems to me, know a better way. With our Law-Gospel orientation, we can encourage the celebration of a soundly theological bicentennial. Our theology revolves around sin and grace, and in our daily lives we think in terms of confession, forgiveness, and the fruits of repentance.

So we start out with repentance. That is familiar ground for Lutherans as we begin each week in our churches by confession together before God that in the past week we "have sinned against Thee by thought, word, and deed." An old saying has it that an honest confession is good for the soul. It is also good for a nation. So we look back over 200 years and confess candidly to God that we have sinned against Him, against our fellowman, and against this great and good land which He has given us. We lay our two centuries, marred by sin, at the foot of the cross.

BUT we repent not for the sake of repentance or as an exercise which has self-denigration as its goal. Rather, we want to be good and receptive ground for the sowing of God's forgiveness. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The sinful Psalmist is expressing also our confidence when he writes, "There is forgiveness with Thee." This is most certainly true.

We are not proud of the sins that have stained 200 years of history, but neither do we let our memory of them diminish the joy of our festival. Let the songs of our celebration be liberally laced with the greatness and goodness and grace of God.

Sincere repentance shows forth the fruits thereof. There will be a renewed appreciation of the fact that our blessings do indeed come from God. With the twelve men who searched out the land of Israel we will say (Deuteronomy 1:25), "It is a good land which the Lord our God doth give us." Our singing of "Praise God from whom all blessings flow" will be as sincere as it is vigorous.

There will also be in us a better stewardship of the land. We will work to restore and preserve the fertility of the precious layer of life-giving topsoil. Grateful for the lavish supply of water God has placed on the earth, we will honor Him by halting our thoughtless pollution of lakes and streams. We will remember the adage, "Waste not, want not," and harbor more carefully the God-given natural resources and supplies of energy. We will work to heal the wounds, the laceration of the land and injustices to people.

The English poet and novelist Rudyard Kipling, in his *Recessional*, gives us a fitting bicentennial prayer, "Lord God of hosts, be with us yet, lest we forget, lest we forget."

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

Copies Available

Congregations and other groups may order copies of *Affirm* at the bulk rate of \$4.00 per hundred. This price includes postage and handling. Single copies are 10 cents each.

Is The Bible Inerrant?

IS THE BIBLE INERRANT? is the title of a booklet of 43-pages, published by the Reverend John D. Frey of Prairie Village, Kansas. This attack upon the historic position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was distributed throughout the length and breath of the Synod by the ELIM organization. It is the content of this booklet that the Bible is indeed errant, that the Holy Scriptures contain inaccuracies, mistakes and contradictions. That the Bible is errant and not inerrant Frey claims is the only possible conclusion which can honestly be drawn from the impartial reading of the Bible.

The Bible is said to contain inaccuracies and mistakes when Biblical statements about the nature of the world are compared with the conclusions of 20th century science. It is also claimed that a study of the Old Testament quotations in the New Testament shows they are not in agreement with the Old Testament texts that are supposedly being quoted.

A number of times in both Testaments where the reader finds parallel accounts of the same events and references to the same personalities, it will be discovered that the accounts disagree and significantly vary and thus the conclusions must be drawn that there are statistical and historical inaccuracies and mistakes. While Frey does admit that some of the errors, contradictions and inaccuracies may not have been in the original writings (called autographs), still he claims that many accounts cannot be explained on this assumption, but clearly show that there are errors in the autographic accounts (cf. p. 25).

The pastor from Kansas further contends that the Bible's inspiration does not guarantee absolute correctness in the original writings but not that the Bible's authority as God's Word is affected by the presence of numerous inaccuracies, mistakes and contradictions. He further argues that the Word of God does not teach the infallibility and reliability and truthfulness of all that has been recorded by "the holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

QUESTIONING the inerrancy and reliability of the total Scriptures was a new development in the history of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and historically speaking may be traced to the late fifties and sixties of this century. Fifty years ago (1926) Dr. William Arndt, professor of New Testament exegesis and hermeneutics at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, authored a book, *Does the Bible Contradict Itself?* This volume considered the following types of passages:

1. Passages of a historical nature from the Old Testament;
2. Passages of a historical nature from the New Testament;
3. Passages of a doctrinal nature from the Old Testament;
4. Passages of a doctrinal nature from the New Testament.

Concerning this book and the texts discussed, Arndt said: "I can honestly say that my aim was not to fasten merely upon such apparent discrepancies as can be shown easily, but to treat those that are most baffling and paraded most frequently in support of the view that the Bible is a book of errors." (p. iv). Six years later he continued his discussions of problem passages in the Bible in the follow-up book, *Bible Difficulties. An Examination of Passages of the Bible Alleged to Be Irreconcilable with Its Inspiration*. In the latter book Arndt discussed the miracles in the Bible, moral difficulties, historical difficulties from the view of science and finally a group of miscellaneous passages. It is interesting to note that a number of instances cited in Frey's book were answered by Arndt over three decades ago! Both of these volumes have been reprinted by their original publisher, Concordia Publishing House of St. Louis.

Some of the readers now being exposed to Frey's attack on the accuracy and reliability of the Bible will probably think that here are some new discoveries. Many of the alleged discrepancies have been recognized for centuries, dating to the time of the

Early Church. Over a century ago Professor Haley published a 473 page book, in which he listed and discussed practically all known and suggested discrepancies, errors, inaccuracies and mistakes which agnostics, atheists, rationalists and Bible-doubters advanced throughout the centuries.

THE attack upon the inerrancy of the Bible is tied up with a denial of the verbal and plenary inspiration and accuracy of the Bible, which was accented during the age of rationalism. It was during this period of church history that a type of criticism was spawned which would only accept those teachings and happenings that could be justified before the bar of reason and were consonant with current scholarly views. Critics rejected the Biblical canon, questioned the authority of the Bible as the Word of God, and rejected the supernatural elements of the Bible.

The major Lutheran Churches in America in the last two decades were taken over by a group of young scholars who were trained at seminaries and universities and who were taught by advocates of the higher critical method. To be able to practice the various kinds of criticism in vogue, the inerrancy, historical truthfulness and reliability of the Scriptures had not only to be questioned but outrightly rejected.

The LCMS also was affected as a new crop of younger scholars who took over at our seminaries, terminal schools and junior colleges. To make viable the conclusions of the higher critical method the traditional Lutheran stance of the inerrancy of the Bible was attacked. The first such written attack is to be found in *The Concordia Theological Monthly*, Vol. XXXVI (Sept. 1965), pp. 577-593.

The booklet under discussion contends that the Bible itself does not use that term "inerrancy," but that its coinage is a construct made to support a position which is not Scriptural. The Bible is only inerrant, (i.e. truthful and reliable) when it speaks about Christ and the way of salvation and those doctrines associated with it.

Passages like John 5:39, John 20:30-31, Romans 15:4 and II Timothy 3:16-17 set forth the real purpose of the Scriptures and the various purposes as given in these passages tell men in what areas the Bible is true and infallible. But concerning peripheral areas these passages do not teach that every last fact recorded in the Bible has been accurately given and in such fields as anthropology, psychology, history, geography, education or any other discipline which does not directly impinge on the plan of salvation. Consequently, Biblical information and assertion can be wrong and do not need to be accepted.

IN his monograph Pastor Frey has cited anywhere between 30 and 40 examples of inaccuracies, mistakes and contradictions in both Testaments, which on the face of it seem to support the contention that the Bible is not inerrant. Some readers may believe they are unanswerable. This writer believes they can be answered. The theological works of men like Keil, Delitzsch, Reider, Young, Arndt, Torrey, Engelder, Haley, Montgomery, Pinnock and others have offered reasonable solutions which therefore would not necessitate accepting the thesis of Frey's book: the Bible contains errors and mistakes.

To answer in detail all the examples given by Frey would require as many pages as his book has devoted to this issue. But it will be worthwhile and necessary to deal with his basic approach to the Bible.

He does not believe that we cannot know whether we actually possess the entire Word of God. The matter of what books actually belong to the canon has not yet been solved. Thus he

(Continued on Page 6)

BIBLE (Continued from Page 5)

wrote: "The possibility exists that there are some differences in the books that make up the Old Testament canon, as well as the New, remains an open question to this day." (p. 26) Again he wrote: "The passages that teach inspiration of all apostolic writings, and testimony from history and the ancient church tell us that our New Testament is a collection of these writings. Of course history is fallible, and for that reason we cannot be absolutely certain and rigid in equating our New Testament with apostolic writings. As mentioned before, the canon remains an open question." (p. 29) Uncertainty thus surrounds the amount of God-inspired texts and books that are authoritative and how much of the Bible's sixty-six books is inerrant.

IT is also Frey's belief that passages like John 17:17, Titus 1:1-2, Hebrews 6:18 and II Samuel 22:31, all of which speak about God's Word being either truthful, or the fact that God does not lie, do not apply to the entire Bible, but only to those portions that deal with Christ and our salvation. They cannot, it is claimed, be used to ascribe inerrancy to all of the Word of God. By employing human beings, God placed limitations upon Himself, for it is human to err and since God employed human writers one normally expects them to make mistakes, which Frey claimed they did. But is that doing justice to these Scriptural passages? Where in any of these passages does the reader find a restriction that God only spoke the truth when He had His holy writers write about the work of redemption of the plan of salvation?

The opponents of Biblical inerrancy have claimed that the insistence of orthodox teachers in various Protestant churches about the errorlessness of the original Scriptures is irrelevant since no living person has them or has seen them. In reply to this claim we retort that an inerrant, infallible autograph is the only view which comports with the nature of God Who is utter holiness, in Whom there is no darkness and Who cannot lie or deceive, that He cannot inspire men to write less than a perfect account of His revelation. Because God the Holy Spirit is the ultimate Author of all of Holy Writ, the writers' finiteness and sinfulness did not prevent the prophets and people chosen in the Old Testament and the evangelists, apostles and other individuals from setting forth an errorless account of what transpired and what were the teachings regarding life and doctrine which the Triune God desired all men to know.

ONLY an errorless, infallible original group of Biblical writings could make available the real and whole truth. What Raymond has written is true:

To arrive at this goal, the orthodox theologian, by utilizing the very best aids in textual criticism, establishes a trustworthy text. Next, by rigorously applying the most accurate rules of hermeneutics, he determines the meaning of the text. Now if the autograph underlying this scientifically established, correctly interpreted text was itself infallible, the meaning derived by means of these two steps would be objective truth. It would only remain for the pastor and teacher to convey this truth in a relevant way to needy men. The theologian who would deny the infallibility of the autographs, however, after moving through exactly similar steps and arriving at precisely the same meaning of the autographs, must press on to a third step, namely, the effort to determine whether the meaning he has arrived at is true or not, an effort which would obviously be controlled by alien presuppositions grounded in pure subjectivism.

Editors preface to Clark H. Pinnock, *A Defense of Biblical Infallibility* (Philadelphia, 1967), (p. I-II).

The claim that the Scriptures as they left the writers contained errors and mistakes is tantamount to making the Bible composed of two different levels of data, those given by men (which may be rejected) and those given by God. This thus presupposes that man sits in judgment over the Holy Scriptures and by the employment of man-made criteria decides what can be accepted and what cannot. This results in a separation between the Bible and the Word of God. By this procedure only that is binding which man decides is truly the Word of God. This limits the authority of the Bible and restricts what can truly be accepted as limited to the area of the Christological and soteriological teachings.

Luther asserted against this position: "It cannot be otherwise for the Scriptures are divine; in them God speaks and they are His Word." Calvin held the identical position. Historical Protestantism in the past advocated the identical stance on the Bible, that all of the Bible not merely portions of the Bible are the Word of God. It is presumptuous for any person to claim that what God has had recorded may be rejected in parts because it does not agree with modern science, modern psychology, modern psychiatry, modern historiography, modern literary Biblical criticism, and the modern spirit of the times.

Dr. Raymond F. Surburg
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

EVANGELISM (Continued from Page 2)

course offerings are: Church Growth; The Theology of Evangelism; Evangelism in the Congregation; Personal Evangelism in the Parish; and Equipping People in Christian Witnessing.

God can grow the coast Redwood tree some 350 feet high and cause it to live 2,000 years. God can place snow on the peak of the 14,410 foot high Mt. Rainer in the Cascade Range. God can cause our hearts to beat 115,000 times each twenty-four hours. God can send us the warmth and the light of the sun from 93,000,000 miles away—but God needs our help, our voice, our words, and our dedication, in bringing the Faith to the vast throng of the three billions of mankind yet to hear about the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting!

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, its Districts, its circuits, its pastors, and its lay people have heard Christ's words in Acts 1:8b: "And you shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and into the uttermost part of the earth." We have the manpower, we have the finances, and we have the desire to reach the populations in fulfillment of His loving-command!

Professor Wm. G. Houser
Concordia Seminary
Springfield, Illinois

Contributions

With their generous support many of its friends have made the publication of *Affirm* possible.

You also can help defray its cost by contributing in any amount to:

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An Overview of Current Missouri

THAT there are still problems aplenty in the Missouri Synod no one denies. That they need correction is equally obvious.

As of this writing, the matter of four of the eight rebellious district presidents has been concluded in a God-pleasing way. Since it was the most serious matter before the entire Synod and especially the eight districts directly involved, we praise God for this recent turn of events!

However, ELIM continues its activities despite Synod's directive at Anaheim to cease and desist. In some districts campus work is unionistic in character and pan-Lutheran despite the fact that we are not in altar and pulpit fellowship with the LCA. Seminex continues its break-away educational program and wherever possible seeks to infiltrate Missouri Synod parishes with its vicars and graduates. Seminex recently has compounded the felony by authorizing the ordination of women. A Seminex woman vicar has been placed in a Texas district congregation.

Minor harassments include the 1976 Lutheran Annual's listing of Seminex professors as "serving a synodical school," when their status has not been in doubt since February 1974 when they terminated their teaching positions at our St. Louis Seminary, and Synod at Anaheim declared Seminex to be a non-synodical school.

In the face of such aberrations, which vary widely in importance, the average loyal Missouri Synod member may still easily become discouraged. He is apt to recall the period in Israel's history of which it is said that "In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

INDEED, much territory remains to be recovered by faithful pastors, congregations, district conventions, boards of control at our sixteen synodical schools, and the synodical administration. Those responsible for oversight, admonition and correction at all levels of our synodical life need to be urged and encouraged in fulfilling the responsibilities assigned to them. However, a backward look over the last seven years is encouraging. The frustrating and permissive non-actions which we presently see here and there are symptoms, not the disease. The basic malady was the gradual, subtle, and near-fatal deterioration of our doctrinal position over a period of 20 years or more. Beginning in 1969 at Denver, Synod took necessary and God-pleasing corrective action. Especially at New Orleans in 1973 and at Anaheim in 1975, Synod reviewed, restated and re-asserted its doctrinal position and provided for its application to the major trouble spots in our synodical life.

Synod definitely reversed its direction. It is the first major denomination in modern church history to call a halt to liberal take-over. This heartening fact needs to be remembered and we should thank God daily for it.

With the disease diagnosed and well under treatment, we will cultivate the necessary patience in dealing with the symptoms. The major areas of Synod's wide-spread educational and mission programs have been restored to conservatives who are loyal to the Lord and His Word. We have come a long way since 1969. This is not meant to foster any indifference to local and regional problems and errors but it most certainly should encourage us on our way. The Lord has promised that as we are faithful to His Word, we shall not fail.

We Need Your Help!

As events in Missouri indicate — some of them summarized on these pages—Missouri may be passing through her most crucial and darkest hour.

Most of us probably thought that the sound Anaheim resolutions for dealing on a practical level with our difficulties would shift the scene of the struggle to the district and congregational level, where it would be resolved within a year or so at the outside.

Those of us responsible for publishing *Affirm* began to feel a sense of relief and hoped that we might soon be able to discontinue *Affirm*; we anticipated a solid and united Missouri re-emerging with its old doctrinal stance clarified.

We had good reasons to believe this; we have men representing historical Missouri in the Synod's key posts; we have the doctrinal resolutions of New Orleans behind us; and building on their base, we have the practical resolutions of Anaheim.

Yet as time passes it appears that the struggle in Missouri is deepening and that the many months to Dallas may prove even more crucial than the months before previous conventions.

We are still confident of God's presence and the joy we have in Christ as well as the ultimate victory! The recent removal of the four district presidents increases our confidence that God is with us!

We are also confident that the many of you who have seen us through the struggle the past five years *Affirm* has been publishing will continue to pray for the success of our common cause, to work for it and to contribute toward it. With a circulation now over 100,000 and with inflationary costs affecting us, you will appreciate that *Affirm* needs your contributions now.

Please help us as generously as you can now and throughout the year! We make our plea in the name of Christ and His pure Gospel.

Affirm

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53216

Six More Local Publications Listed

In the last issue of *Affirm*, twelve local publications, which support the conservative cause of Missouri, were listed. Six more similar publications, which have written to us as per our request, are listed below:

Laymen's Analysis

South Dakota Concerned Lutherans
Box 1082
Sioux Falls, South Dakota 57101

North Wisconsin Newsletter

Mr. Verlyn Miller
713 Vine Street
Eau Claire, Wisconsin 54701

The Northwest Loyal Lutheran

Rev. Martin W. Lankow
Immanuel Lutheran
Second & Madison
Albany, Oregon 97321

Pensacola Area Newsletter

Rev. William G. Kennell
3820 Forest Glen Drive
Pensacola, Florida 32504

Doctrinal Laity

Save Our Synod
P.O. Box 284
Victoria, Minnesota 55386

The Kansas Layman

Rev. Glenn Bitter
Box 8197
Topeka, Kansas 66608

Board Acts With President

Synod's Board of Directors, after it had heard of President Preus' action, removing four district presidents from office, according to an official letter to the church, "received a report from its Executive Committee and Administrative Officer, and from Synod's legal counsel. This report covered the study which has been given in past weeks to the various events and reactions which might be experienced if the office of any District president were to be vacated.

"The Board stated that it was satisfied with the very careful study and planning which have taken place.

"The Board expressed confidence that board members and other officials in all parts of the Synod will fulfill the special responsibility which they have as officials of the Synod, which exists for the purpose of serving the ministry of Jesus Christ, and that they will act in a manner which will serve individuals interested in the District and Synod, all member congregations, the District as an organization created by the Synod and the whole Synod itself.

"Following the meeting, Vice-Chairman Harry Barr, speaking for the Board of Directors, stated, 'The members of the Board are assured of the ability of the Synod to absorb what has happened today and to continue as the servant of the kind of congregations and individuals who under God's grace have been and are the real source of strength of the Synod for its nearly 130 year existence.' "

Affirm's Mailing List

If you have friends to whom you want *Affirm* sent, please inform us. We will be happy to place them on our mailing list.

To comply with postal mailing regulations *Affirm's* mailing list is arranged numerically according to Zip Code Number.

Therefore, it would be helpful to us if names were ARRANGED NUMERICALLY ACCORDING TO ZIP CODE NUMBERS, AND ALPHABETICALLY UNDER EACH ZIP CODE. This will enable us to check easily to determine if the names submitted are already on our mailing list, and eliminate duplicate mailings.

It would also be helpful if names and addresses were printed clearly or typewritten.

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor 4:13

AELC

SINCE Dr. Preus ousted four district presidents from their office, events have moved on.

All eight of the district presidents who have ordained Seminex students walked out of a meeting of the Council of Presidents when that group refused to rescind the Preus action. Obviously, it could not have done this; only Synod's president is authorized to take actions of this kind.

Not long ago a group of the 801 Sem students made an effort to communicate with the Seminex grads of this year to urge them to return to Missouri, perhaps by meeting somewhat less stringent requirements, if these could be agreed to by Missouri's authorities. They were rebuffed.

Whatever occurred at the Preus-Tietjen meeting, a more recent development, the meeting failed to produce any constructive resolution of any difficulties.

Various district conventions have been held; those attracting the interest are, of course, the districts which have presidents with liberal tendencies. The analysis has been made that these presidents have discovered they had less support in many areas than they had counted on and that the conservative reaction was beginning to make itself felt more strongly than in the past in these districts.

Another of the many groups proliferated by the dissidents, the Coordinating Council (with a St. Louis address), has held an initial series of six regional meetings. According to reports that seem accurate, 812 people attended these meetings and represented 375 congregations, a considerable number of which were conservative parishes.

ITS total strategy is contained in a 62-page book, *Resource Book for Coordinating Council Regional Meetings*. It contains the current master plan of the liberals: to incorporate regional associations of like-minded congregations as well as to incorporate a national body in Illinois, the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC).

The *Resource Book* contains suggestions on such matters as pension and welfare plans, relocation plans, the church extension fund, model resolutions for districts and congregations, the legalities of the situation, as well as other analyses and materials.

What does the future hold?

It is possible that an August meeting of those with liberal leanings will result in forming a new church body. It is possible that the decision may be postponed. *Resources* offers "trip wires" which will set the process of leaving Missouri in motion, but whether these will trigger action or not is a matter of speculation.

In *As Missouri Turns*, a supplement to the *Forum Letter* on May, 1976, the Rev. Richard Neuhaus worries at some length over the AELC, its future, and its stance. He states, "... It seems that very few congregations are positively motivated to leave Missouri" and cites as evidence that less than a handful

joined a former breakaway group, LCM, Lutheran Church in Mission.

HE worries over the psychology involved in the split and the fact that what some will regard as "freedom from uptight organizational and theological anxieties others may view as irresponsibility."

He makes the point behind this observation loudly and clearly and emphatically: until now those who felt sympathy with the protest movement, felt it because they were motivated by protest against the "assaults" of the other side.

He urges, therefore, that the AELC make proposals that are positive and specific and strike the note of dignity a national organization should have.

He also worries strongly over the fact that it remains unclear as to whether the AELC is to be interim or a permanent church body. He seems fearful it may harden so quickly into another Lutheran body that it will become impossible for the AELC to be the vehicle for the reorganization of American Lutheranism.

He has great concern that a rampant congregationalism, the result of Missouri's struggle, will dominate the new body, and he again returns to his principal anxiety, "It is clear what the AELC will be freedom from, but quite uncertain that to what it is freedom for." He points out that a national church body committed to the Bible and the Confessions, but permissive theologically, will "understandably scare off many potential member congregations."

MOREOVER, potential membership of the AELC does not agree on many issues; women's ordination, what fellowship means, the connection between social action and evangelism, homosexuality, and many other matters. He states that Seminex, "acting as though it were a church," has decided for women's ordination.

"Reckless adhocism abounds also in other issues. At the August assemblies in 1974 and 1975, ELIM resisted even the most modest efforts to affirm a common theological posture."

He finds it crucial that these questions be addressed in an orderly and positive way. He admonishes that "the time for protest and posturing is past" and warns that unless congregations "have seen some proposed blueprints in advance" they aren't likely to join the AELC.

It is a fascinating analysis made by one who has been on the inside of the movement for a long time.

If it is accurate—and there is every reason to suppose it is—it draws the picture of a theologically floundering movement, which may begin, if it gets under way at all, with great difficulties and, quite likely, with a small number of congregations.

Affirm doesn't prophecy how events will fall out.

But the Rev. Neuhaus had made the AELC appear at best a rather unattractive option to Missouri.

Loyal Managers of Christ

THE Scripture correctly states, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works." Ephesians 2:10. This sets the whole tone for the Christian as a manager of God's gifts, for Christ.

God makes the telling point, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." In every respect, the Christian is the total product of God's personal work. His whole person is a gracious gift from God. His spiritual, Christ-like re-creation is a gift of the Holy Spirit, through Word and Sacrament. The Christian's entire being must be accredited to God. The redeeming work of Christ on Calvary's Cross is the touchstone that made it possible. His resurrection made it an accomplished fact.

As the crown of God's creation and the prize of Christ's redemption, the Father in heaven, has placed this earth and its gifts into the Christians' hands. We have literally become God's managers of everything, that God entrusts to us. We are to manage His blessings in the undivided interest of His kingdom. It is called, "Showing forth the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into this marvelous light."

Our motive for such undivided service is, "The love of Christ constrains us." Here there is no room for selfishness, greed or personal pride. His blessings are on loan, to us, for His work and our blessing. Genuine love for Christ seeks to make His blessings count where they are needed. Nothing will let that resolve of Christian faith and love be sidetracked.

In Christ's kingdom the usage of God's gifts begins with the GREAT COMMISSION. The preaching and teaching of the pure Word of God and the correct administration of the Sacraments are first priority items. It begins in our home parishes. It extends to the most remote areas of the earth. Through the preaching of the Law we call men to repentance. Through the Gospel we offer them God's saving grace in Christ Jesus.

AS the outgrowth of saving faith in Christ Jesus, the Christian life of stewardship reaches out to be a blessing to all of God's creation. These Spirit moved acts are the fruit of saving faith in Christ Jesus. As the vine Christ expects that we the branches are to bear fruit.

It is in times, such as these, that the branches are tested. The

Lord would find out how sturdy the branches are that have been grafted to Him. If His people can bear fruit under adversity, then the Lord can be pleased with them. They are sturdy Christian stock.

In the early 1960's a stewardship study was made of every congregation of the South Dakota district, over a 50 year period. The results showed, that the percentage giving level of God's people, percentage wise, was nearly doubled during THE GREAT DEPRESSION over the prosperous years that followed. That fact is still good for our day. Scripture is correct, "In the day of the Lord, My people shall be willing!"

The entire Scriptures testify, that the true workmanship of God is proved in His people, when the events of life are most difficult. Missions spread fastest under persecution. Percentage giving rises, when income is the lowest. Christian education flourishes, when it is derided and mocked. The church grows most hardy, when mocked and suppressed. God is not afraid to have His product tested. He knows that it will stand the test and come out ahead of the field.

Of all things, manufacturers pride themselves on the durability of their product. So does God. Of His Church, He makes the claim, "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." All of Scripture and history testify to that fact. Rest assured, our age will be no different. God's people will show the mettle of their faith. They will engage themselves in the wholehearted support of His church. They will more than amply demonstrate, that they "are created in Christ Jesus, unto good works."

To you, the dearly beloved reader, the Lord has entrusted His personal confidence. To you, He has given the job to do. In your hands lie the work and the support of our beloved Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. You have been re-created through Word and Sacrament, in Christ Jesus. In the power of the Holy Spirit, through Word and Sacrament, the hour of abundant fruit bearing has come.

The Rev. Harlan Harnapp, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
North Platte, Nebraska

Synod's Financial Position

As Pastor Harnapp so aptly states in his article above, the work and support of our church body has been placed by God's grace into our hands. Before Dr. Preus acted against the four district presidents, a thorough evaluation was made by him, the board of directors, synod's council, and synod's treasurer, of the possible legal and financial implications of groups of congregations breaking away from the Missouri Synod as a result of the theological struggle.

The result of the various analyses is that Synod is in a sound legal position, that the properties of the districts are not in actuality theirs and that they are property of Synod.

The fiscal analysis resulted in the conclusion that Synod could meet all the financial contingencies that are foreseeable, should a split occur. The two most serious possibilities the church faces are a run on church extension funds, which Synod feels able to cover, and a loss of income from congregations who separate themselves from Synod. While the analyses are undoubtedly sound and accurate, Pastor Harnapp's words should be taken to heart. In this critical period we should do all in our power to support in every possible way, also with monies, the work of the church.

Contributions

With their generous support many of its friends have made the publication of *Affirm* possible.

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If you have friends to whom you want *Affirm* sent, please inform us. We will be happy to place them on our mailing list.

To comply with postal mailing regulations *Affirm's* mailing list is arranged numerically according to Zip Code Number.

Therefore, it would be helpful to us if names were ARRANGED NUMERICALLY ACCORDING TO ZIP CODE NUMBERS, AND ALPHABETICALLY UNDER EACH ZIP CODE. This will enable us to check easily to determine if the names submitted are already on our mailing list, and eliminate duplicate mailings.

It would also be helpful if names and addresses were printed clearly or typewritten.

The Legal Status of Districts

THE congregation at Corinth was St. Paul's problem child. In First Corinthians he found it necessary to deal with an imposing list of things that had gone awry in the parish, including a rash of lawsuits in which Christian sued Christian.

Paul's criticism is two-fold. First, there was a basic confession of failure in the fact that two Christians found it necessary to ask a pagan judge to settle their differences. Even worse was their reason for going to court, namely, to cheat and defraud one another.

In view of I Corinthians 6, Missouri Synod Lutherans historically have been reluctant to go to court and to become involved in litigation, whatever the reason.

Our synodical administrators and board of directors share in that laudable reluctance as they face the possible legal implications of the dismissal of four district presidents who have refused to comply with the directives of Synod regarding ordination of men who are not qualified or certified for pastorates in our Synod. Even though they have been replaced by acting presidents who are to serve until district conventions are held, the deposed men continue their rebellious ways and have refused to give up their offices, in some cases with the support of their district boards.

But districts are districts of Synod; they can be created or dissolved only by Synod. District assets are synodical assets. Until the rebellion within Synod is resolved, the legal ramifications are manifold. The administrators of Synod are elected by Synod and are responsible to it. They are custodians of Synod's properties and other assets, and must give an account of their stewardship to Synod every two years.

ALL of which means that our synodical officials, who personally and individually would shy away from court action, must be prepared to take whatever steps are necessary to protect synodical assets. Anything less would be dereliction of duty.

With these broad responsibilities in mind, some historical, structural, and legal facts bear reviewing.

In its early years, Synod had no districts. But God's blessing brought growth, both numerical and geographical. Seven years after its organization, Synod found it advisable to begin the formation of districts. It was clearly understood that this was done so that Synod could do its work through them and that the district presidents were simply representatives of the Synod and the synodical president in that particular geographical area. In no way did Synod conceive of the districts as a law unto themselves and as semi-independent little "synods" which could do pretty well what they wanted. That view, taken by some today, would guarantee the death of our church body.

Quite naturally, our history is reflected in our structure, that is, in the synodical constitution and bylaws. For example, Article XI states that the president of Synod "has supervision regarding . . . the administration of all officers of the Synod; the individual Districts of Synod; all District Presidents." Article XII states that Synod's "Constitution is also the constitution of each District of the Synod." District presidents are to "see to it that all resolutions of the Synod which concern the Districts are made known to the Districts and are carried out by them." District presidents "shall submit an annual report of their administration to the President of the Synod." It is not the function of district presidents to decide who is to be ordained to the ministry; rather, they are to ordain "the candidates for the ministry assigned to their Districts."

ALL of which is to say that district presidents are not the agents of the congregations in their geographical areas, but rather Synod's representatives to those congregations.

Since district presidents are, in fact, synodical officers, the board of directors of a given district has no jurisdiction in the

matter of removal of that district's president by action of the Synod.

There are also definite corporate law limitations on districts. A district, of course, is legally incorporated so that it may do its business in a proper and legal manner. Thus, let us say, a given district is an Illinois corporation. Synod, with headquarters in St. Louis, is a Missouri corporation. But Synod is the parent corporation and no part of any corporation can introduce corporate law in an attempt to forbid the parent from taking action. Put another way, Illinois corporate law could not be used by that district as a shield between the subsidiary corporation (district) and the parent corporation (Synod).

THIS is but a small sampling of the legal factors bearing on the present synodical situation, specifically as they relate to the four districts whose presidents have been dismissed from their office.

Synod's board of directors, a majority of its 14 members being laymen, is "vested with the general management and supervision of the Synod's business and legal affairs" (Bylaw 2.77). It is therefore the synodical board which properly has the major responsibility for safeguarding Synod's financial and legal interest in the present controversy even to the extent, if necessary, of placing some districts in receivership.

The board of directors has walked many extra miles in dealing with the four district presidents. The board's final appeal to the four, which should be read by every member of Synod, is evangelical in approach, masterful in logic, sound in theology, and firm in position.

If some, differing from Synod's doctrinal position, feel that they must leave our Synod, so be it. We can only pray that they will leave quietly and peaceably and without making necessary distasteful court actions.

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

More Publications

The following publications, which support the conservative cause of Missouri, are listed below:

The Loyal Lutheran

Rev. Julius V. Kimpel
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
45 Smith Street
Paterson, N.J. 07505

Kyrios

St. Matthew's Lutheran Church
1915 Hogeboom Avenue
Eau Claire, Wis. 54701

Layman's Analysis

c/o Hope Lutheran Church
6416 S. Washtenaw Ave.
Chicago, Ill. 60629

The Lutheran Voice

P.O. Box 338
Troy, N.H. 03465

Talking Together

Michigan Laymen's Analysis
P.O. Box 1275
Southgate, Mich. 48195

Laymen's Analysis

DCP of Central New York
P.O. Box 53
Syracuse, N.Y. 13201

The Lay Voice

Lutheran Committee
P.O. Box 50033
Dallas Tex. 75250

A Retired Pastor Looks At Synod

A pastor who retired about a year ago recently wrote the following letter to a friend in the parish ministry. It has the virtue of objectivity and a clarity in defining issues that result when one has time to think. The letter is printed with his permission.

I haven't written you since shortly after retiring and taking up our residence here. I remember gratefully our fine monthly pastoral conference and its doctrinal studies and fellowship.

However, I must also say that I'm enjoying my retirement. We are both in reasonably good health. I have opportunities to fill pulpits of congregations in this area and Mom is quite active in the church here to which we belong.

As I watch the passing scene, it seems to me that the situation in Synod might well come to a head this year. No doubt, separation might be best, even though some congregations will probably leave our fellowship.

I have time to think now, time which was not available in my busy parish days. I wonder if I could share some of my thoughts with you regarding our synodical problems?

Eight district presidents have been saying much about congregational autonomy. Why haven't they equally emphasized responsibility in the fellowship of Synod? To a congregation that insists on calling a Seminex graduate who refuses to be certified according to proper synodical procedures, a district president might properly say, "I know you have the right to call any pastor you wish. However, if you insist on exercising this right and insist on walking your independent way, instead of restricting your freedom for the sake of good order and peace in the church, then you should be honorable enough to separate from Synod and seek your fellowship elsewhere." St. Paul had certain freedoms, but he voluntarily restricted some of these in order not to offend others in the church and for the good of the church.

I am puzzled about the refusal of many Seminex graduates to agree to certification by the colloquy route. If such graduates are convinced that the Seminex professors were not fairly treated, they have a right to voice their views. But having expressed their opinions, what more is needed to make their position clear? They have "made their point." Why shouldn't they, for the sake of peace and good order in the church, agree to the colloquy arrangement? By agreeing to be certified according to the synodical regulation they would show loving consideration toward those members in the congregation who are sincerely troubled about non-certification and they would help greatly toward re-establishing harmony.

This one may surprise you: I wonder if our district and synodical voting arrangement is fair? At the convention of the Southern Illinois district each congregation was represented by a pastor and a lay delegate. This gave pastors too much influence in voting. I surmise that quite a number of the younger men voted contrary to the wishes of the majority in their congregations. It might be fairer some day to have a congregation represented by a pastor and two or three lay delegates. Perhaps pastors should have no vote at all. It is true, lay delegates are often influenced by their pastors. It is something to think about.

Congregational autonomy? The ALC requires a form of certification. Is this tyranny? Why don't some of the ELIMites protest vehemently against this? And what shall be said about the LCA owning the properties of local congregations? At least, so I have read.

THE eight district presidents ought to be consistent. When one of these men gives a congregation to understand, "You have the right to call any pastor you wish, for the congregation is supreme," then he ought to be consistent and also make it known, "Since the congregation is supreme, you are also free to reject subscription to the Confessions of the Lutheran Church." Yet, these men uphold the position that the congregations in their districts must subscribe to the Lutheran Confessions! Unless a congregation applying for membership agrees to this, it will not be accepted. Let us be consistent. If a congregation should not be restricted in calling a pastor, it should also not be restricted if it prefers not to accept the Lutheran Confessions. How strange it is to insist on freedom for the congregation in one situation and then insist on limiting the freedom of the congregation in another situation.

Are all rules governing a church body out of order? Is it wrong to have church regulations which ask congregations for the sake of good order and out of consideration for their fellow Christians to restrict their freedom somewhat? In our life as citizens we observe rules established for the welfare of the community. A citizen has consideration for those who live around him.

A final thought: Since a district official is also a synodical official to whom synodical regulations apply, he should act in a responsible and honorable way. If his conscience tells him, "This synodical by-law is unscriptural; I cannot uphold it," then, rather than disobey the regulation, he ought to resign. This is the honorable and upright way to act. Lacking that, we now have turmoil. And who are blamed so often? The conservatives. One is reminded of King Ahab's question of Elijah, "Art thou he that troubleth Israel?"

I know that you give time and effort to other matters in addition to your congregational work. May the Lord help you and bless you.

I expect no reply to this letter. You have more than enough work.

Book Review:

The Radical Nature of Christianity

By Waldo J. Werning

(Mandate Press, South Pasadena, Calif. 91030, \$5.85)

Dr. Robert Preus, President of Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Ill., writes in his Foreword to this book that it not only speaks to the stewardship and mission challenges of our day, but answers many of the theological aberrations which tend to undermine the mission of the church. The book presents clearly the Biblical issues of the unscriptural deviations that are rampant in many churches in our day, including evolution and universalism. Proposing conservative answers to current doctrinal issues, the book is up-to-date in its proposal for progressive ideas in missions, evangelism, stewardship, education, discipleship, and organized church work. Original statements are printed from Francis Schaeffer, Donald McGavran, Eugene R. Bertermann, Theodore Raedeke, and many others. A practical book on current issues in church doctrine and parish practice! (Pre-publication price until July 15 is \$4.85, if ordered from Church Growth Books, 9714 West Ruby Avenue, Milwaukee, Wis. 53225).

Preus Letter to Four Presidents

IN his May 25th letter to the pastors, teachers and congregational leaders of the Atlantic, Eastern, English and New England districts of the LC-MS, the districts whose presidents he vacated from office, Dr. J. A. O. Preus again spelled out the fact that districts have only limited power and that they are the creation and arm of Synod itself. He quoted Dr. August R. Suelflow's statement,

Matters pertaining to several or all of the Districts are the business of the Synod. The District, on the other hand, is empowered to conduct the affairs pertaining only to itself in the areas outlined. Thus we can speak of District "home rule" but not "autonomy."

He also quoted the *Resource Book of the Coordinating Council* in which the legal counsel of the dissidents advised them that Dr. Preus' position is the correct one. In two paragraphs the legal counsel of the dissidents made very clear their almost hopeless position over against the courts,

Our legal counsel affirms that no one in the eight Districts has much chance of proving its independence from Synod or its rights to claim it is free to ignore Synod. Most likely the courts would decide in favor of Synod on any litigation over District assets and/or corporate papers. In other words, the Districts really are Synod and they belong to Synod because it established them.

Only the English District has any chance in litigation, and that no more than fifty percent favorable. Even the English District will probably be judged to be the property of Synod.

He discussed the election of district presidents in these four districts and stated that the re-election of any of the four former presidents would be regarded as null and void unless he states his willingness to comply with all requirements of the office as imposed by the constitution, by-laws, and resolutions of the Synod including but not limited to Anaheim Resolution 502A. He further stated that

If no election is held, or if a disqualified person is elected, the man who is now acting president of the District will continue to so serve until the 1978 District convention.

Finally he made it very clear that

If the former District president continues, even after the District convention, to hold himself out as president of the District, appropriate action will be taken at the appropriate time to remedy this.

He expressed his hope that Synod would be restored to harmony as well as the hope that those responsible for decision making in the districts would be fully informed of both sides of the issues,

Finally, I would earnestly hope that the delegates inform, insofar as this is possible, their fellow congregation members of the issues before us. They have the right to hear all sides, and the ultimate choices in many crucial matters will be made by them. Such a serious decision as leaving The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and entering a new denomination, one whose structure is still unknown because no constitution has been proposed to date, and whose future is uncertain, because only one or two congregations have voted to join the newly incorporated "Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches" to date, ought to receive very careful consideration.

We Need Your Help!

As events in Missouri indicate — some of them summarized on these pages—Missouri may be passing through her most crucial and darkest hour.

Most of us probably thought that the sound Anaheim resolutions for dealing on a practical level with our difficulties would shift the scene of the struggle to the district and congregational level, where it would be resolved within a year or so at the outside.

Those of us responsible for publishing *Affirm* began to feel a sense of relief and hoped that we might soon be able to discontinue *Affirm*; we anticipated a solid and united Missouri re-emerging with its old doctrinal stance clarified.

We had good reasons to believe this; we have men representing historical Missouri in the Synod's key posts; we have the doctrinal resolutions of New Orleans behind us; and building on their base, we have the practical resolutions of Anaheim.

Yet as time passes it appears that the struggle in Missouri is deepening and that the many months of Dallas may prove even more crucial than the months before previous conventions.

We are still confident of God's presence and the joy in Christ!

We are also confident that the many of you who have seen us through the struggle the past five years *Affirm* has been publishing will continue to pray for the success of our common cause, to work for it and to contribute toward it. With a circulation now over 100,000 and with inflationary costs affecting us, you will appreciate that *Affirm* needs your contributions now.

Please help us as generously as you can now and throughout the year! We make our plea in the name of Christ and His pure Gospel.

On the News Front

ACCORDING to Dr. Robert O. Preus, president of the Springfield Seminary, rumors that this Sem has changed its charismatic policies are untrue. He stated that "the policy was originally intended to be only an in-house policy for faculty and students, but in the past year has proved to be very beneficial in opening up conversations between 'charismatic' students and faculty members." Both faculty and students believe that the policy has been helpful to the school.

* * *

TWO visiting professors will serve Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, each for a period of two quarters, starting with the winter quarter. The first of these, the Reverend Hans Lutz Poetsch, member of the Lutheran Hour branch office in Bremen, Germany, has wide education and experience in many forms of church work. Like Dr. Warth, he will teach systematic theology. Dr. Martin Carlos Warth is a Brazilian with excellent credentials from Brazilian as well as German schools. He presently serves Concordia Seminary in Porto Alegre, Brazil, as director of graduate studies.

* * *

OUR April 12 issue contained an appeal for support entitled "We Need Your Help!" In it we stated, "The recent removal of the four district presidents increases our confidence that God is with us."

Our attempt to urge people to support our point of view was perhaps overstated and, in the sentence referred to, expressed in words which were not the best. We certainly did not mean to imply that God is not with those supporting the moderate position. We recognize that each of us stands under both God's judgment and His grace. We also recognize the need to keep open dialogue so that God's will for our Synod can truly be determined. It is our hope that this will assist in doing that.

* * *

THE Commission on Theology and Church Relations offers its services to congregations needing help with questions of doctrine. Last September it stated, "These are difficult days for many people in our Synod. Apparently there are those who are seriously considering leaving the LCMS and there are those who are actively encouraging this. The CTCR recognizes the right of Christians to make such decisions. Perhaps some members of the Synod will even feel compelled to make such decisions in order to maintain their personal integrity. But as the Commission of the Synod to which has been assigned the primary function of 'providing guidance to the Synod in matters of theology and church relations,' it fervently hopes that such drastic action will take place, if it is to take place at all, only after every effort has been made to study the doctrinal issues. Division among Christians on the basis of anything less than doctrine is against the will of God and is to be avoided." (Reporter, October 6, 1975)

It further states in a recent letter from the Reverend Samuel H. Nafzger, its executive, "In response to a resolution adopted at the Anaheim Convention of the Synod entitled *To Seek Unity* (1975 Resolution 3-01), the CTCR is presently engaged in coordinating the preparation of a long range and comprehensive program designed to help, under our Lord's gracious benediction, restore harmony and concord within the Synod. Under the theme 'That We May Grow,' this program will include special studies on the Scriptures and Confessions for lay and clergy, special conferences for pastors and teachers, and a theologians' convocation. This program, about which you will be hearing much more in coming months, will be officially inaugurated at the 1977 Synodical Convention and will extend into 1980.

* * *

THE Northern Illinois District may have come up with one of the best election procedures yet — a questionnaire sent to all possible candidates for office. The responses to the following questions of those chosen as candidates would be duplicated and supplied to delegates in advance of the convention. They then would have the most significant information about these candidates:

1. What has been your experience in the work of the church, what offices have you held?
2. Describe your current attitude toward the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, its administration, its theology and programs, and in what direction you would like to see it move?
3. Describe your current attitude toward the Northern Illinois District, its administration, its theology and programs, and in what direction would you like to see it move?

(Continued on Page 7)

On the News Front: (Continued from page 6)

A survey was conducted by a journal of the United Methodist Church to uncover the stance of its members. It was discovered that Methodists are more conservative in general on theological and social matters than the programs of the Methodist church would indicate. More than 10,000 responded, and it became clear that Methodists are bitter and feel helpless because they in general believe the church does not hear them when it shapes its programs and policies. *Affirm* believes that a similar gap exists between leaders with liberal tendencies in Missouri and most of Missouri's laity.

* * *

NOT only has the probation of the St. Louis Sem been lifted by the Association of Theological Schools and not only is the Sem, therefore, again fully accredited, but the report on it by the ATS team visiting the Sem for several days proved a glowing one. Excerpts from it follow:

On the academic community: "We are satisfied that the faculty constitutes a vigorous community of faith and learning. Our conversations with individual faculty members uniformly indicated that the faculty are happy to be at Concordia, are satisfied with the conditions under which they work, respect their colleagues and administrators, and feel a part of a team engaged together in the enterprise of theological education. They believe they are respected and valued by the Board of Control and the administration, and they value the relationships obtaining among themselves and with students . . . Scars from the events of early 1974 are remarkably absent . . . What we found in visiting among the faculty was confirmed by student perceptions of the faculty."

On academic freedom: "Our conclusion is that faculty and students do examine positions other than those deemed acceptable to the Synod, and that, in that sense, academic freedom is present and operative."

On the Board of Control and administration: "It is our impression that at the present time the Board is doing a good job of maintaining the vitality and integrity of the institution." The team was "impressed by the rapid development of a new administrative structure at Concordia Seminary. Conversations with faculty and students revealed widespread appreciation for the work of the president and dean."

On the graduate program: "The administration has made intelligent efforts to provide these students with a context which encourages them to become a community of peers who educate each other."

* * *

THE *Report of the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Conciliation* has finally been released. The Committee, consisting of seven men representing each side in Missouri's struggle and a chairman met on a monthly basis and worked long and hard to attempt to define the issues. Those isolated as the chief issues were: inspiration and inerrancy, Gospel and Scripture, the Historical-Critical Method, and the third use of the Law. This 147 page document on these matters and proposals as to how to use the *Report* was placed in Dr. Preus' hands, since he had appointed the committee as one of many other means by which he tried to unify the church.

District President Kuntz, in his introduction to the *Report*, calls attention to the fact that both sides to the struggle spoke past each other. He writes, "One of the disappointments experienced by the committee is that it did not arrive at a point where either caucus could express the other's point of view to the complete satisfaction of the other caucus. The failure to reach this goal can be accounted for, at least in part, because the press of the schedule did not allow for the patient and even repetitious process which such accomplishment requires. There was indication, however, in some of the committee process that the goal should not be regarded automatically out of reach."

While this may be true, it seemed to some conservatives on the committee that genuine agreement, the unity the church has always had, could not under the present circumstances be reached.

Copies of this report can be purchased from Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Missouri, 63118 at \$2.00 per copy or \$7.50 in lots of five (cash with order) on stock No. 9-2308.

With the increasing familiarity of the laity with the issues, the *ACDC Report* might prove helpful to many who already know the essence of the doctrinal differences in Missouri.

(Continued on Page 8)

On the News Front: (Continued from page 7)

RECENTLY the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors of Missouri made a statement concerning Synod's financial position and the essential information is contained in the following excerpt:

The Executive Committee regrets that during this past week some have circulated unfounded rumors, allegations and innuendos, casting doubt on the Synod's financial position. The truth is that the Synod is in a strong financial position. The audit report by Ernst & Ernst, the Synod's independent CPA's, just received for the fiscal year ended January 31, 1976, shows:

1. General current fund assets of \$4,101,507 including liquid short term investments of \$3,400,000 and specific current fund assets of \$5,672,602 including liquid investments of \$3,000,948.
2. Expansion fund assets of \$3,387,403 including liquid short term investments of \$2,551,250.
3. Income of \$25,490,055 and expenses of \$25,487,193 for a surplus of \$2,862 for the year as compared to a deficit of \$306,003 for the prior year.
4. Synodical Church Extension Fund assets of \$54,670,327 including liquid short term investments of \$7,314,008 and total fund balances of \$23,935,344 — an increase of \$1,871,590 from the prior year.
5. Consolidated fund balances, exclusive of Church Extension and trust funds of \$128,836,347.

Editorial Policy

While the articles in Affirm with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For Affirm is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

The Editorial Group

The Rev. William T. Eggers
Richard G. Korthals
The Rev. Ewald J. Otto
Dr. Robert Preus

Affirm

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
2 Cor 4:13

The Hour of Decision

THE moment of truth for many pastors and congregations is at hand. The doctrinal controversy in our Synod is at the parish level and they must decide whether they want to abide by the church's doctrinal position or whether they no longer share the Missouri Synod's doctrinal stance and wish to go elsewhere.

The decision finally is a congregational one since our Synod, deliberately fashioned along democratic lines, is a federation of congregations. A parish joins voluntarily and it may leave at any time. But it should ponder the decision, not on the basis of emotion and rhetoric, but on the doctrinal issues and with a full understanding of the implications and ramifications, not only what it is getting out of, but also what it is getting into.

This all started, of course, in 1973 when Synod in a series of landmark decisions reasserted its right to have a doctrinal stand, to say what its position is and what we as a Synod hear the Word of God to be saying especially on doctrines in dispute, and to require that those affiliated with Synod hold to that position.

The objection of those who had started to drift from our doctrinal moorings was immediate and loud. As expected, the first protest came from the faculty majority at our St. Louis Seminary where the creeping liberalism of the Historical-Critical Method of viewing the Bible had started quietly some 20 years earlier. Liberal pastors, and some laymen under their influence, soon followed suit.

WHAT happened then will challenge the analytical abilities of future historians and psychologists. Here and there around the country protesters met, pontificated, and formed groups. Since one mark of a liberal is to "do your own thing," a rash of organizations sprang up that form a veritable alphabetical soup: ELIM (Evangelical Lutherans in Mission), PIM (Partners in Mission), LCM (Lutheran Church in Mission), ECCE (East Coast Common Endeavor), AELC (Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), CC (Coordinating Council), and, most recently, the ESEL (English Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church).

Some did not get off the ground. Some overlap in purpose and are unbearably competitive. Some coordinate with others and some are semi-independent splinter groups. Some are regional, and others are national. All have their own leaders with a resultant power struggle in the making.

The executive secretary of the CC felt obliged to try to explain all this to the increasingly confused liberals in the June 21 issue of their national publication. But faced with all the uncertainty, he could only use such iffy phrases as "would likely become," "at least as things stand now," and the like.

Though the extent of these groups may not have been anticipated, the variations themselves lie in the very nature of liberals. To explain: the controversy is doctrinal—this cannot be said often enough. And while the division in Synod is not as broad and extensive as some picture it, it is much deeper than many realize even at this late date. For it centers in the very basic

question of how we view Holy Scripture. If, as liberals claim, the various books of the Bible suffered the same fate as ordinary human documents at the hands of editors, compilers, and amplifiers so that the historicity of no event in Jesus' ministry is beyond doubt, then, as Dr. Martin Franzmann said already around 1960, the two most vulnerable doctrines are the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection of our Lord. And if they go, all doctrine goes. So, the controversy is doctrinal, and it is deep.

BUT the liberals have consistently befouled that doctrinal trail by dragging across it the red herring of "repressive measures," and similar charges. Apparently it has done little good to point out that the Missouri Synod is the most democratic of the three major American Lutheran bodies, that the synodical president has no more power than the Synod itself gives him, that he operates under the limitations of the same constitution and by-

(Continued on page 2)

A Note

Many good things have been happening in Missouri's missions, schools, district conventions, and in other branches of her work. We take great heart from them; the church has started to move forward again under God! However, some districts were predictable trouble spots: in this issue *Affirm* reports on three of them. It also points up in its front page article that, while most of Missouri's congregations believe her teachings to be God's Word, love her, and want to belong to her, some congregations face an hour of hard decision: to stay in or to leave Missouri. Major problems confronting them are outlined. . . . Once again, *Affirm* is happy to run an excellent article by a layman, who clearly and forcefully states that Missouri's laity need and want to hear both Law and Gospel. The longest article, that on the *ACDC Report*, called by its author "possibly . . . the last serious and prolonged theological meetings between Missouri's moderates and conservatives," presents the highlights of that *Report* on the doctrinal differences which have rent Missouri. They are real and worth reviewing again. Because of the large amount of good material *Affirm* had in hand, *The News Front* has been omitted, except as the reports of the three district conventions might form a part of it.

The Exodus That Wasn't

AFTER a rather discouraging beginning, the 84th Convention of the Eastern District became the source of some satisfaction for district conservatives. During the first session of the convention, as expected, a resolution was passed "To Continue To Recognize Dr. Frinke In His Ministry As President." The vote on the resolution was 181 to 91. Immediately thereafter, a resolution was presented on the subject of Seminex. It affirmed the alleged right of congregations to ignore "the procedures for certification, calling, ordination, and installation of candidates," and instructed the district president to continue to ordain and install graduates of Seminex called to the Eastern District. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 145 to 105.

The most controversial resolution of the convention was presented during the second session by Pastor B. Jerry Wagner, one of the incorporators of the new Eastern Synod. Pastor

Wagner's resolution specified six minimum conditions to be met by the synodical administration on or before October 30, 1976. If the Synod failed to meet these typically unreasonable demands, the District Convention was to reconvene on that date in order for pastors and congregations to consider affiliation with the Eastern Synod. After prolonged discussion, and numerous amendments the resolution was defeated by a vote of 126 to 134.

THE significance of all this remains rather unclear. It would appear that a majority of district congregations will continue to recognize Dr. Frinke as president for the time being. Dr. Frinke has made it very plain that he intends to continue to ordain and install graduates of Seminex. A sizeable minority of congregations, however, remains committed to the Synod and to lawful and orderly procedure. These congregations recognize Pastor Albert Bahr as the president of the Eastern District. Since the Synod also recognizes Pastor Bahr, thereby making it impossible for Dr. Frinke to operate in any official capacity as district president, it is likely that Frinke's position in the district will become increasingly untenable.

This being the case, the most viable alternative for moderates would seem to be the fledgling Eastern Synod of the A.E.L.C. But this too does not look overly promising in view of the defeat of Wagner's resolution 404A. It is evident that the great majority of congregations in the Eastern District have no interest in leaving the Missouri Synod. Moderate leaders at the Convention tried bravely to remain cheerful in the face of this unpleasant reality. They offered the lame excuse that the defeat of their summons to the exodus was healthy evidence of the diversity of the moderate movement. In private, however, one moderate leader admitted, "My troops defected, all the way down the line." In the aftermath of this convention, the future of the Eastern District as an integral part of the LCMS looks very bright indeed.

The Rev. Laurence White, Pastor
St. John Lutheran Church
Millvale, Pennsylvania

Decision (Continued from page 1)

laws as previous presidents, and that he has no way to "grab power."

A specially favorite subject of the liberals is the "autonomy" of the congregation. Now, the fact is that in any structure, civil or religious, total self rule, completely being a law to oneself, is impossible. In the Missouri Synod a congregation has as much autonomy as is possible in a confessional church body. However, in its agreement with regard to our doctrinal position and with respect to the certification of men for the ministry, a congregation voluntarily gives up its autonomy. Without that, Synod as we have known it for over a century, would cease to exist.

But the liberals will not have it so. They want Synod to be a federation of districts, not congregations, with each district pretty well independent and district presidents able to authorize the ordination of men they deem fit. They want congregations to have the right to stay in the Missouri Synod and yet call as pastor anyone they wish. In short, they want autonomy driven to its root-meaning, "self-law." This, of course, means anarchy and chaos.

WITH that liberal mind set of law-less-ness in view, it is not hard to see that the liberals are in real trouble as they now try to jell the various national and regional groups which have developed with rabbit-like fertility. With only their opposition to Missouri's "law" holding them together, once they leave the Synod and are free of that law, anything can happen.

The more perceptive liberals see this. Richard Neuhaus, for example, puts it this way, "It is clear what AELC will be freedom from, but quite uncertain as to what it is freedom for." He sees a "mood of rampant, even sectarian, congregationalism in moderate circles." He lists these unsettled doctrinal issues: "Women's ordination, the meaning of fellowship, abortion, homosexuality and the connection between evangelism and social action, to mention but a few on which moderate congregations are not agreed." He points out that "At the August assemblies in 1974 and 1975, ELIM resisted even the most modest efforts to affirm a common theological posture."

Any congregation may leave Synod. But if it has been led to believe that Missouri is a frying pan, it might well give some thought to what sort of fire it is jumping into. Before voting to leave, a congregation should be clear on the issues, it should pray long, and it should ponder ELIM, LCM, AELC, ESEL, CC, ECCE, and PIM.

Dr. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
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Affirm

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Editorial Policy

While the articles in Affirm with their applications to contemporary events rest on Biblical truths, they do not necessarily in all their details represent the views of The Editorial Group. Any divergence of opinion, however, falls within the latitude allowed by Article II of the Constitution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

For Affirm is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

Atlantic District Report

THE Atlantic District Convention was held on the campus of Concordia College, Bronxville, New York, on the week-end of June 11-13. Most of its actions came as no surprise, and ran in a similar vein with the special convocations and conventions of recent months.

As was expected, the former president of the district, Rev. Rudolph P.F. Ressimyer called the convention to order. In his address to the assembly, he asked for and received a reaffirmation in office by a vote of 149-58.

The largest bulk of time during those three days was devoted to questions of the synodical controversy. Both clergy and lay delegates supportive of the Synod tried valiantly to have the Acting President Henry Koepchen address the assembly. Each effort was turned back, followed by a protest from the floor pointing out unconstitutionality of the body's actions.

Pastor Ressimyer set forth the agenda for the meeting in his address. He called for the delegates to do three things: 1) Decide on who will serve as president of the district; 2) Urge the delegates to issue a call to all congregations and individuals of the district to join the Association for the Support of Lutheran Ministries (ASLM) as quickly as possible; and 3) Encourage congregations and individuals in the district to explore the possibility of forming a new national church body in the future. He ended this appeal by saying, "Let us not deceive anyone. The Synod has moved against me and thereby against you."

The subsequent resolutions passed by the gathering were an execution of that agenda, including recognition of Seminex graduates as qualified voting delegates, a reaffirmation of Pastor Ressimyer as district president, openly urging congregations and individuals to join an alternative church association, and insistence that Ressimyer be allowed to vote on the Concordia Bronxville Board of Control.

Long lines at the microphones and impassioned debate took place on the final afternoon of the gathering sparked by an attempt on the part of 35 "moderates" to bring a resolution to the floor similar to a resolution adopted at the New Jersey Convention.

THE resolution in part called for such things as: a moratorium on the use of "A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles"; a phasing out of Seminex by 1979, and a preparation on the part of the Synod to receive the faculty and students of Seminex into Concordia Seminary by that year; a reinstatement of the four suspended presidents, who would then refrain from ordaining uncertified Seminex graduates; and a call for a broad spectrum of writers for official publications, presenting a diversity of opinion, articles and responses.

Instead of debating the resolution per se, the floor committee offered a resolution to respectfully decline consideration of the resolution drafted by the thirty-five.

Debate on the resolution to decline, differed from other debates in that the majority of speakers were from the so-called "moderate" camp. To indicate how vital this vote would be, Dr. Ressimyer spoke from the floor and stated that should the compromise proposal come to the floor and be adopted, he would probably have to resign from the position in which he had been reaffirmed. The resolution to decline considering the proposal of the thirty-five carried by a margin of 100-65.

As the meeting drew to a close, Pastor Ressimyer pledged his best to work within the Synod for the good of the Synod. At this point one of the pastors rose with a copy of the Coordinating Council's resource book and quoted from its cover, "the Missouri Synod is no longer a viable institution for a Gospel-centered mission and ministry," and asked Pastor Ressimyer (who had signed this document) whether he still felt that way about the Synod. The session ended without an answer given to the question.

One thing is apparent from Atlantic's attempt to hold a convention. We are a deeply divided church body—and the real tragedy is that people and congregations will be leaving the Synod without facing up to the doctrinal question of the authority of the Holy Scriptures and their place in the church.

Those loyal to the Synod and its doctrinal base left with frustration and sadness, but confident that faithfulness to the Scriptures as the inspired and inerrant Word of God in all its parts, is of greater import than the winning or losing of vote counts. Luther wrote, "I have a feeling that one passage of Scripture could push me off the face of the earth." Commenting on this remark of Luther, C.F.W. Walther wrote, "Were I to note that the doctrine which I proclaim to the people is contradicted by one Bible passage, I should have no rest day or night. I would not know where to flee."

The Rev. Ernst F. Pflug, Pastor
Redeemer Lutheran Church
Bayside, New York

We Need Your Help!

As events in Missouri indicate — some of them summarized on these pages — Missouri may be passing through her most crucial and darkest hour.

Most of us probably thought that the sound Anaheim resolutions for dealing on a practical level with our difficulties would shift the scene of the struggle to the district and congregational level, where it would be resolved within a year or so at the outside.

Those of us responsible for publishing *Affirm* began to feel a sense of relief and hoped that we might soon be able to discontinue *Affirm*; we anticipated a solid and united Missouri reemerging with its old doctrinal stance clarified.

We had good reasons to believe this; we have men representing historical Missouri in the Synod's key posts; we have the doctrinal resolutions of New Orleans behind us; and building on their base, we have the practical resolutions of Anaheim.

Yet as time passes it appears that the struggle in Missouri is deepening and that the many months to Dallas may prove even more crucial than the months before previous conventions.

We are still confident of God's presence and the joy in Christ!

We are also confident that the many of you who have seen us through the struggle the past five years *Affirm* has been publishing will continue to pray for the success of our common cause, to work for it and to contribute toward it. With a circulation now over 100,000 and with inflationary costs affecting us, you will appreciate that *Affirm* needs your contributions now.

Please help us as generously as you can now the throughout the year! We make our plea in the name of Christ and His pure Gospel.

To Be or To Be

THE English District Convention, long awaited as an indicator of the direction which the moderates within the Missouri Synod would take, is now history. I attended all of the official sessions and two which were unofficial, the caucus of those intending to remain within the Missouri Synod, and the meeting of those interested in the English Synod. What follows are personal reactions and impressions gained during those days, and the results of the reflections of the past several weeks.

The first fact which struck me was the almost unalterable course which events were taking. It appeared from the very beginning that a vote in favor of forming the new English Synod was almost inevitable. I got the feeling that the five-hour debate which preceded the moment of decision was a formal procedure which had to be carried out, and that the arguments offered were more for therapeutic purposes to give individuals a chance to vent their feelings. The plans for the new synod were well laid out in advance, even to the point of including a proposed constitution in the convention workbook.

Was the split inevitable? I believe that an honest look at church history would cause one to answer "Yes." The seeds for this parting of ways were sown many years ago when a new theology, involving a different way of dealing with Holy Scripture, was introduced into our Synod. History shows that most major church bodies have suffered division when this has occurred. The big difference in the case of the Missouri Synod is that the conservatives have remained in the majority, and it is the liberals who are splitting off. In other large church bodies the opposite has been true.

THE second fact which I noted and which interested me very much was the general feeling of good will which seemed to dominate the discussions. Leaving Missouri was certainly a volatile issue, one in which emotions played a big part. Heated discussions and angry exchanges would have been understandable. Yet very little emotionalism took place, especially between members of the district. The major exceptions to this could be observed in the actions of the individuals who asked questions of Dr. Preus. It was quite obvious that many looked upon him as the major source of all the difficulties. It was also obvious that many did not understand the very limited power which the synodical president really has.

Maybe this is saying something to all of us. Perhaps separation is the one way in which we can hope to achieve reconciliation. As long as we are together in one Synod our discussions will tend to be subjective rather than objective. Our feelings will tend to get in the way, emotions which are easily aroused because of the tensions involved in day-to-day living. These will be far less if we become two separate bodies; then we can start talking about the things which really divide us. Then we will be able to take an objective look at our doctrinal differences, and in the process start to have meaningful discussions.

THE third area which captured my interest also left me with a heavy heart. It involves the future of this budding church body.

I listened with rapt attention to all of the arguments which were presented both for and against the formation of the new English Synod. There seemed to be one thread which ran through all of them, and it went something like this: "We have to form a new group because we do not agree with the administration of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. We feel that it is oppressive and does not give us adequate freedom. We do not agree with the actions of the past, and we see no hope for improvement in the future." In other words, the differences as they saw them were not doctrinal, but political.

There was a procession on Saturday night which wound its way from the dining room where the banquet had been held, to Grace Church, one half block away. I watched as the banner bearers led the way through the gathering darkness. I listened as voices burst forth in song, filling the night air with a haunting beauty. I could sense the fellowship which they were experiencing, and felt an emotional urging to join the throng. I listened as emotional speeches were made outlining the triumphs of the moment and the difficulties which still had to be faced. I heard the ready laughter, emotional outbursts which indicated the excitement and the spirit of adventure which the participants were feeling at the moment. All of this enveloped me and permeated my being—and I cried inside.

Why did I feel sad, when all of those around me were expressing joy? It was because I was thinking of tomorrow and the trials which face them, both individually and as a group. I thought of what was drawing them together and wondered what would happen when this common cause they were now experiencing would disappear. What would happen when there was no longer an admission to fight? Who would be their rallying point when Dr. Preus would no longer be on the scene?

THESE are some difficulties that they face in the days ahead. I can see others in a number of areas. The first concerns leadership. Theirs will not be a problem of not having leaders, but rather the difficulty will lie in having too many. I can foresee a political struggle for control which can cause further division. Right now President Hecht is the appointed leader, but there are many others waiting in the wings; to cope with this will not be easy. The second problem area as I see it is doctrinal. It is easy to say that we all subscribe to the Bible and the Confessions; it is quite another thing to live with that confessional statement. The problems will arise when it comes to application. They face some rather difficult questions which still must be decided, and the range of viewpoints within the group is extremely wide. One concerns ecumenicity. Just how many church bodies will they be in fellowship with? The range of opinions varies considerably, yet somehow a decision will have to be made. How will this be resolved? And what about the question of abortion, or homosexuality? I cannot believe that everyone within the English Synod will be in favor of giving their blessings to both of these activities. Yet some are advocating a view which extends almost this far. What about the ordination of women? Again, wide differences are present. Who will prevail?

These are some of the questions which congregations should ask themselves as they now struggle with the decision which will deeply involve not only their own congregation, but their personal lives as well. Everything is new and exciting now, but what about tomorrow? Are you perhaps thinking of leaving because you feel you can escape problems in that way? Then look ahead. The problems you now have may prove to be mild in comparison with those which you could face in a new church body.

To be or not to be, that is the question. May you make your decision on the basis of clear thinking, God's Word and His Grace, and not emotional desires!

Prof. Richard G. Korthals
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A Layman Looks At The Future of Our Church: Obedience to The Word

OUR church has gone through much pain, heartache, tears and mental anguish to arrive at a time in history we had hoped wouldn't come. Many have already called it her darkest hour.

After one of the worst bombing blitzes England had suffered from German aircraft during World War II, Winston Churchill addressed his countrymen to encourage them. A particular quote from that speech has been singled out and repeated often (*Certainly, this has been Britain's finest hour.*) The glory years of empire building were not, in the view of the prime minister, as great as the time and in the way his nation now had stood up to danger.

While none of us enjoy the bitterness and hardship of the struggle in our church, we can, however, claim this year as one of our finest. Yes, even though we face the consequences of past battles and hard problems ahead, it's a great time in our church's history. There is the concern over getting the work done. Our finances are slowly improving. Missions and other problems have taken on new life. But defections have taken place. If we let the dissidents predict our future, we certainly are looking at our situation from a gloomy vantage point. But, let us forget them for the time, so that we can see God's promises for those who obey Him.

Our reason for optimism is not the adoption of certain resolutions or the action of President Preus. Neither is it that the convention restated again the firmness to which we hold to Scriptures. Our church does not take special joy in firing men from their positions nor does it base its hope for the future on such action. While it is better that dissidents leave Missouri Synod, that fact does not make the rest of us more evangelical.

OUR hope is in our faithful God in whose every word we trust. This can be our finest hour when decisions are made in obedience to that Word. There can be no other basis for the unity of faith. What a joy of optimism this should be to all our hearts! What an impetus for cooperation in the commission of Jesus!

The very doctrine for which we contend based on both the Law and Gospel should be in no way subdued. The value of doctrine is not in our possessing it as a jewel of rare price, but in its use as the two-edged sword. It is not to be locked safely away, protected against those who would take it as the spoils of war, but it is our offense and defense to be used to conquer for God's Kingdom and confound our enemies.

Before a soldier is able to use a weapon effectively, he must be familiar with it. He must build confidence in it as his trainers present it as the flawless sword it is. Those the church trains in the Word to be sent into the world to preach should be thoroughly convinced that the weapon they wield is already heated and forged into a super powerful weapon.

Just sampling the Word of the Almighty God lightly is enough to strike us with awe. Before there were ears to hear, it caused the miracle of creation. There were no gases to mix and no fire to ignite them. There was no power or influence but God's to form the universe. His persuasion was His Word; He said and it was so. The disciples of Jesus knew this and believed the Word of God to be His power. They recognized Jesus to be more than mere man when He spoke the Word and the stormy sea was still. His Word called Lazarus from death to life. Although He could have defeated the devil with a snap of His fingers, He chose to do it with the written Word of God. This power that commands obedience of nothingness to become matter, that governs the forces of nature, and brings life through the ears of the physically dead is the power of the church.

AT ONE time the book of God's law was misplaced, covered up and forgotten in the temple at Jerusalem. It was so long out of use the nation of Judah forgot God, fell into horrible sin and worshipped false gods. But, a great and wonderful thing happened when the priest found the Word of God again. After the scribe read it, he rushed it to the King. When he read it, his heart was so affected he gathered all of the people to hear it and they all repented. They destroyed all the furnishings and anything else that had to do with idol worship. What a miraculous thing when the Word enters people's hearts then changes their wills to obey God.

God's Word can be lost even though the Bible remains open on our altars. It can be lost even though the church officially claims its inerrancy. It can be lost in heartless worship, in dead form and ritual, and in robot like responses. But, when we recognize God's Word and see in it His purpose for us now and the way to eternal life, we've found it. Each of us needs constant scriptural guidance. *We lay people especially need that direction and we want our pastors to be firm in the Word, not only claiming its truth, but using it to equip us for right living.* To see the fruit is the best evidence of the Word's use. Failing to use the Word now after contending for it so strongly would be our most shameful error.

There is no better instruction than that given by Paul to Timothy:

All scripture is inspired by God and helps us to teach, to show what is wrong, to improve and train in right living so that a man of God is ready and equipped for every good work.

Before God and Christ Jesus, who is going to judge the living and the dead, I solemnly call on you—in view of His coming and ruling over us—preach the Word, keep at it at the right time and the wrong time, correct, rebuke, encourage, being very patient and thorough in your teaching.

A time will come when people will not listen to sound teaching but, craving to hear something different, will get more and more teachers whom they like. They will refuse to listen to the truth and will turn to fictions.

But you, keep a clear head in everything, endure hardship, do your work of telling the good news, and everything else you should do as a pastor.

—II Timothy 3:16 to 4:5
(An American Translation)

Mr. Robert Pett
Wales, Wisconsin

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Moderate-Conservative Reports Show Difference

DURING these summer months of 1976 much of the Missouri Synod's attention is directed to the convention actions of its member districts, particularly in regard to those dealing with presidents who were removed because of the unauthorized ordination of Seminex graduates. Under these circumstances it is easy to forget that at the root of the Missouri Synod's problems are theological differences, touching the very foundations of the Christian faith.

This past spring the Missouri Synod president, Dr. Jacob Preus issued a 147-page document, *Report of the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Reconciliation (ACDC)*. The *Report* contains essays prepared by a committee appointed by Dr. Preus, on which conservatives and moderates were equally represented. Meetings of ACDC were chaired by Dr. Arnold Kuntz (president of the Southern California District) and took place in 1974 and 1975. The *Report of the ACDC* is valuable for two reasons. First, the members of the ACDC understood themselves to be either committed conservatives or committed moderates. They knew the issues before accepting appointment. The issues could be squarely faced. An equal division, seven and seven, meant that no side had an advantage. One side called itself the Conservative Caucus and the other the Moderate Caucus. Clearly drawn lines meant the possibilities for seeing the differences were greater. Secondly, the format of the meetings made certain that the real, and not peripheral, issues were discussed. The four topics discussed are examined below. Each Caucus presented its position and then each was allowed to respond to the other's presentation. Thus in the *Report* under each of the four topics there are four papers, two presented by each Caucus.

Inspiration and Inerrancy

BOTH sides agreed to the terms Inspiration and Inerrancy, but differed on what they meant. The Moderate Caucus understands "inspiration" not only to include the process under which the Scriptures were given, but also the entire procedure in coming to faith. The Conservative Caucus understands "inspiration" only as the unique process through which God gave the Holy Scriptures and by which He alone is its primary author. Here is the Moderate position in its own words: "Thus we consider inspiration as an integral part of the saving work of the Holy Spirit as Scripture itself does . . ." This Moderate understanding of "inspiration" to include both the writing of the Scriptures and believing for salvation was put forth previously by several members of the former faculty majority at St. Louis.

The Moderate position must be scored on two points. Though II Timothy 3:15 connects inspiration with coming to faith, it applies inspiration *solely and only* to God's activity in giving the Bible, and not to anything else, as Moderates claim. Secondly, the Moderate position does recognize the basic qualitative difference between the Spirit's work in the writers of the Scriptures and of Christians who comes to faith through those Scriptures. The final result of such a position is that we Christians are raised to the level of apostles and prophets and become authorities or the apostles and prophets are lowered to our level and simply become persons whose faith is worth emulating.

Another serious difference involves the concept of inerrancy to mean that they do not report anything which is contrary to fact. Their own definition in the *Report* states: "The nature of this inerrancy is to be defined in terms of the Bible conforming in its statements with events that actually happened, with things

as they really are." This concept of inerrancy, the Conservatives see as basis to understanding the entire Bible and therefore a foundation doctrine of the Christian faith. Without it nothing is certain. This the Moderate Caucus emphatically and frequently rejects. The Moderate concept of inerrancy includes truthfulness and reliability, but not flawlessness. While Moderates tolerate the word "inerrancy," they prefer it not be used. Where it is used, it can be an umbrella for a number of ideas.

The Conservative Caucus rightly rejected this openended concept, not only because it fails to do justice to the Biblical view, but also because it would lead to endless confusion. If human language operated on the principle that each person can attribute at will any meaning to any word—as the Moderates do especially with "inerrancy"—meaningful communication would become impossible and each day would be a replay of the confusion of tongues at the Tower of Babel.

The Moderate Caucus tried to define inerrancy as "factual precision," the non-use of figurative language, and demanding verbal exactness in quotations. This, of course, is their own invention. What in the world is "factual precision?" And what we consider "factually precise" today can be made "more precise" tomorrow. Figurative language frequently expresses how a situation really is. Jesus said that Herod was fox—and it is exactly and precisely very clear what He meant. If the New Testament is written in Greek and the Old in Hebrew, how could the New Testament quote "precisely" unless it gave the quotes in Hebrew, which most of the New Testament readers could not understand? The "verbal inexactitudes" found by the Moderates in the New Testament's quotes of the Old are not quotes but allusions.

Gospel and Scripture

THESE two words, "Gospel" and "Scripture," have also been at the center of discussion. Other church groups have been divided over the issues of inerrancy and inspiration, but not "Gospel" and "Scripture." Both Moderates and Conservatives say that the Bible is authoritative, but the reasons given are different.

Moderates contend that the Bible's authority comes from the Gospel. They claim that the Bible is true and has a claim on the Christian's life *because* it works faith. The Conservative position is that the Bible's authority is derived from God through inspiration irrespective of whether or not a person believes the Gospel's message contained on its pages.

Here is the Moderate position: "We accept the Scriptures as Word of God on account of our faith in the Gospel." The Conservative Caucus asserts that the Moderate position abolishes the Bible as the sole source of authority in the church, *sola scriptura*, and replaces it with the Gospel.

What the Moderate Caucus means by "Gospel" is not always clear. The confusion is compounded because this "Gospel" becomes the key for interpreting the Bible. The Moderate Caucus also makes the claim that various interpretations of the Bible are permissible if the "Gospel" message is not affected. But the question arises and remains unanswered as to how one can know the "Gospel," if there are a variety of interpretations of certain sections of the Bible. For the Moderates, what they call "Gospel" becomes a prior, autonomous, and somewhat independent and undefined norm or judge on how the Bible is to be understood. The Conservative position is that the Bible informs

(Continued on next page)

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us about the Gospel and not vice versa. Members of the Conservative Caucus also objected to the Moderate position as allowing a divergence on a number of doctrines which could be judged as remaining unaffected by the "Gospel." The matter of the ordination of women pastors, allowed by some Moderates, was the case cited by the Conservative Caucus.

Historical-Critical Method

THE section dealing with the "Historical-Critical Method" produced minimal results, because the real problem was not tackled by the Moderates. This phrase has attracted much attention in the Missouri Synod controversy, because practitioners of the method have found many, if not all, sections of the Bible to have no solid basis in historical fact. Rudolph Bultmann, recognized as the founder and leading practitioner of the method, found nothing in the New Testament as being real history, with perhaps the exception that Jesus died.

The Conservative Caucus criticized the Moderates for not dealing with this very basic issue of the Historical-Critical Method. The question put to the Moderate Caucus, but not really answered, is "To what extent does a unit of Scripture describe real events which occurred largely as the unit describes?" The Moderate response was that their use of the method is done under Lutheran presuppositions. The Conservative Caucus asked for some examples how the Historical-Critical Method done under Lutheran presuppositions is any different from the method done without Lutheran presuppositions. Regrettably the question of whether things happened as they are described in the Bible was not squarely faced and answered by the Moderate Caucus. The case of Jonah would have been appropriate. Conservatives in the Missouri Synod have argued that it must be understood historically. Moderates have taken the opposite point of view and have claimed for support scholars who use the Historical-Critical Method. Here is a case where "Lutheran presuppositions" have in no way changed the use of the method. "Lutheran presuppositions" have not saved Jonah from being consigned to a figurative and non-historic existence.

Third Use of the Law

LUTHERANS have traditionally spoken of three uses of the Law. No controversy exists over the Law as a curb in maintaining civil order and as a mirror in showing us our sin. Controversy exists over the third use, the Law as a guide in the Christian's life. Both are agreed certain behavior stands condemned for the Christian because of Scriptural prohibitions. However the Moderate Caucus speaks of the guidance of the Spirit in situations where the Scriptures do not explicitly provide guidance.

In theory the Moderate Caucus acknowledges a third use of the Law, as the Conservative Caucus points out, but by detaching it from the Scriptures they are in fact and in practice denying it. The correctness of the Conservative observation is demonstrated in the Moderate view of the ordination of women pastors. Here is a New Testament directive for the Christians which the Conservatives find binding but the Moderates do not.

Conclusion

THE entire Report is available from Concordia Publishing House for \$2.00. The discussions of the ACDC might possibly be the last serious and prolonged theological meetings between the Moderates and Conservatives of the Missouri Synod. It put the issues on the table.

At the heart of every theological difference there seems to be one principle. That principle is the answer to the question: "How can I know the truth?" Luther found the answer in the Bi-

ble and his opponents in the pope. The same question is being raised in the Missouri Synod today with two different answers. The Moderate Caucus made it clear that the "Gospel" is the answer to the question about truth and the Conservative Caucus says the Bible.

As pastors, congregations, and laymen make decisions that will be decisive for the church, their congregations, themselves, and their children, our only prayer is that they will remember what the question really is: *How can I know the Truth?* Again with Luther, the Bible must stand as the only answer.

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In the *Papers* a group of scholars, addressing themselves to specific historic occasions and in one instance at least not to the Historical-Critical Method per se, essentially focus on that method and its weaknesses.

Without planning it, each of them in his own way and from his own perspective for the occasion on which he wrote, reinforced the line of argumentation the others used. As a result, these speak with one voice.

Together, moreover, they forcefully present the case against using the Historical-Critical Method as it has not been presented to our knowledge, so persuasively in our generation.

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
II Cor. 4:13

3-09 Still Draws Fire

TO such well-known Missouri Synod numerals as 500 and 3558, the New Orleans 1973 synodical convention added 3-09. The synodical resolution bearing that number produced long and bitter debate on the convention floor. Efforts were made to remove it from consideration by the delegates. In the 3 years since then, 3-09 has been under continuous attack. Liberals, including some liberal-controlled districts, will memorialize the 1977 Dallas Convention to have it rescinded or emasculated by the removal of the "accusatory factors."

What is there about 3-09 that evokes this constant drumming opposition? The answer lies in a review of some history. Twenty years and more ago, during the synodical presidency of Dr. J. W. Behnken, disquieting reports of what was being preached and taught by some pastors began to come in from parishes. These complaints reached a crescendo during the regime of President Harms, whose failure to act was a major factor in his being voted out of office in 1969.

The source of the trouble lay in the so-called Historical-Critical Method of Scriptural interpretation, a view of the Bible which ultimately jeopardizes literally every doctrine of our Christian faith, including the virgin birth of our Lord, His substitutionary suffering and death, His resurrection, and therefore the Gospel itself. Its rationalistic roots had become imbedded gradually but deeply in the majority of the faculty at our St. Louis seminary.

RESOLUTION 3-09 was thus born of some 20 years of doctrinal erosion which had begun quietly but ultimately became quite blatant. Dissatisfied with the inaction of the former synodical president and the school's Board of Control, the Synod itself in that resolution took a stand and rendered a judgment with regard to what was being taught our future pastors at the seminary. It is not overstating the case to say that at stake was the very survival of the Synod as we have known it and the doctrinal position it had held for over a century. Waiting two more years until the next convention could well have been too late.

Realizing the utmost gravity of the seminary situation, President Preus months prior to the New Orleans Convention had appointed a special blue-ribbon 24-man committee to study faculty publications and the voluminous transcripts of the Fact-Finding committee's faculty interviews, to evaluate Board of Control materials, and to hold personal interviews. Out of all these countless hours by Committee #3 on "Seminary Issues" came Resolution 3-09 as its findings and recommendations to the Synod. Though its six and one-half pages are long as resolutions go, it is a marvel of compactness for the territory covered. It is required reading for anyone seeking to understand the present doctrinal controversy. A historical introduction provided the background of the seminary's doctrinal problems, followed by an explanation of the three major areas in which the seminary teaching had departed from Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. The resolution concluded by listing seven specific false doctrines.

THE convention's in-depth discussion of 3-09 spanned three sessions and two days. Its adoption was a landmark action in which, for the first time in modern church history, a major denomination reversed its liberalizing doctrinal drift.

Small wonder that 3-09 at the convention and thereafter has been the object of incessant opposition. To the liberal element in the Missouri Synod that wants the doctrinal tent to be broad enough to "allow room for us all," 3-09 is an abomination with its precise delineation of the doctrinal position of Synod, its pinpointing of the three major areas of doctrinal drift, and its specific list of seven false doctrines which "cannot be tolerated in the church of God, much less be excused and defended."

But there is more to the liberal opposition against 3-09. It has been claimed repeatedly that the resolution is unfair because it is directed against the faculty majority without naming names, thus placing all of them "under a cloud."

Let's look at that complaint as well as the structure of 3-09 a bit closer. The title of 3-09 is, "To declare faculty majority position in violation of Article II of the Constitution." There is no doubt as to *what* 3-09 addresses itself, namely, a theological position that is contrary to God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions and therefore is false doctrine no matter who holds it, named or unnamed. St. Paul, having asserted the doctrine of salvation by grace, adds that anything else is false doctrine even "though we or an angel from heaven" are those who teach that alien and false doctrine.

But it is equally clear to *whom* 3-09 addressed itself, namely, the former faculty majority. Is this blanket judgment either unclear or unfair? Not when one remembers that the faculty majority, in every document it has issued relative to the five counts of false doctrine on which the seminary president was found guilty, has said such things as, "We are one in confession and suspension . . . with John H. Tietjen," "What our two documents, Faithful . . . I and II, do teach, that we still stand by personally and collectively," etc., etc.

FURTHER, if the faculty majority actually wanted to be cleared or found guilty on an individual basis, as they so often have claimed, why did they walk out of the seminary in violation of their calls to teach there, thus removing themselves from the jurisdiction of the church-elected board which both in 3-09 and in the synodical by-laws is given the responsibility of dealing with faculty members? Why, moreover, did the faculty majority spurn the Wiederaenders committee which was established by Synod at Anaheim in 1975 to provide the individual consideration which the faculty majority since 1973 had insisted it wanted? It would be a simple matter for any faculty member who did not share the erroneous faculty majority position to clearly and specifically disavow the seven false doctrines listed by Synod in 3-09. Yet, not a single one has done so.

(Continued on Page 6)

On the News Front

ELIM is circulating a 4-page document, "The Issue at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis," which purports to be a chronology of events, starting in 1969, related to the 1974 walkout of students and faculty at our St. Louis seminary.

Readers of the document should be aware that it operates with selective truth and is pockmarked with serious errors and misrepresentations. A few items selected at random will serve as illustrations.

The document states that Synod's Board for Higher Education is "appointed" by Dr. Preus. Fact: The seven-man BHE is elected by Synod.

The document says that in 1972 the Seminary Board of Control reported that it had found no false doctrine after "interviewing the faculty." Fact: The Board, which at that time had a liberal majority, interviewed only approximately half of the faculty, 29 to be exact. Even those partial interviews provided enough evidence for the conservative board majority to state flatly, "We cannot report in good conscience that there is no false doctrine."

In discussing the fact that the Board of Control did not immediately implement the August 1973 suspension of Dr. Tietjen, the document states, "Because the Board had in its haste turned all the safeguards of bylaw 6.79 into mere formalities, legal opinion directed the Board to suspend the suspension." Fact: The synod-seminary legal counsel found no fault with the Board's action. However, he told the Board that since the synodical bylaw 6.79 for handling charges had been adopted by Synod only a month earlier at New Orleans, that time was needed to study the new bylaw. He also informed the Board that Dr. Tietjen's attorney had threatened immediate court action against the Board of Control. It should be added that the Board's legal counsel is too professionally competent to "direct" the Board.

The document, alleging that "the Preus administration" in 1973 made offers in return for Dr. Tietjen's possible resignation, adds, "The Board chairman, he [Dr. Tietjen] was told, had agreed to the arrangement." Fact: The Board chairman cannot agree to anything not authorized by the Board. The Board specifically went on record in January 1974 that "the Board knows of no deals nor has it participated in any." To state, as the document does, that Dr. Tietjen was "told" something by somebody is to engage in rumor and hearsay.

The document states that when the seminary students walked out Jan. 21, 1974, "They declared a moratorium on classes until the Board clearly identified who the false teachers were and exactly what false doctrine was being taught." It then adds, "They never received an answer." Fact: The Board responded that very same day with a pledge "to make all deliberate haste in resolving the implications of Resolution 3-09 of New Orleans over against the faculty" and asked that "professors and students return to their classes forthwith." It is obvious that the students were not interested in an answer and disregarded it when given.

These few samples, which could be multiplied, will suffice to show that the "chronology," while operating with some facts, is so replete with errors and distortions as to make it practically useless to any one seeking reliable information on seminary and synodical matters. At best it further muddies the synodical waters, at worst it misleads. Fair-minded members of Synod will wonder why it was printed.

* * *

THE referral of the Tietjen case to a vice-president of Synod causes an interested observer to seriously wonder. Over three years after the case was opened, it is still in the process. To be sure, the rights of due process for the accused must be preserved. It could be asked, does that hold true for the plaintiffs?

Submitting to the requirements of the synodical Constitution, the plaintiffs have been bound to a tedious and complicated process. First, the requirements of bylaw 6.79 had to be met in its entirety. At the end of that, a second process was begun under bylaw 6.80, known as the ecclesiastical or clergy supervision process. This process demands that the following sections of the Constitution and bylaws be followed: Constitution Article III 7-8; VI; XI B; XII 6-9; XIII; bylaws 1.05, 1.09; 2.27, 3.45, 3.49 Chapter V, bylaw 6.79C. Each step is intended to insure the rights of the accused.

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An Open Letter

After stating, in an open letter, that we need a peaceful split in Missouri, Prof. Korthals continues with a number of other points, some of which are included here.—Ed.

2. *We need a firm doctrinal position.* Much has been made of the allegation that no one has been convicted of teaching false doctrine. The accusation comes from both sides. Why??? What purpose would be served??? A few may have personal motives, but I believe that the majority instinctively want this to take place because it would be a means of establishing doctrine. We would ascertain what is false doctrine, and why it is so. For this reason it would have been well if guilty members of the faculty majority could have been charged. This did not — and now will not — take place. Therefore another means must be found.

I believe that the time has come to write an additional confessional statement dealing with the modern day theological problems, and that the constitution should be amended to include this new statement in Article II. This is needed to both provide guidelines and a position for those within the church — and as a witness to those without. This is our only hope for a lasting peace. The *Statement* is a start, but it bears the Preus label — the name of one person. We need something which has been requested by Synod, couched in confessional language, written by a small and highly talented group but reviewed by the faculties and the Commission on Theology and Church Relations, and approved by the Synod after thorough study. This in no way detracts from our present confessional statements, but rather acknowledges that confessions speak to problems and conditions, of which new ones arise from time to time. Assurance should be given that in no way will that which once was said be changed. There will be no lasting peace until this is accomplished, since the present controversy concerns the validity of that one "judge" to whom we can turn — Holy Scripture. We owe that to those who will follow us. Time is important — it would be advantageous if the Synod could resolve the start of this endeavor at the Dallas Convention. What a blessing this could be if we all study Scripture together! What a witness it would be to those in other church bodies who are engaged in a similar struggle! It is something which I feel God wants us to do. Do you agree???

3. *Educational Systems.* Pruning is needed, as well as determination of purpose. Today we have more and more schools with liberal arts programs which far outshadow their synodical program. It is perhaps justifiable on a financial basis, but in the meantime subsidy is given to all alike, and as a result the schools and students dedicated to a synodical purpose suffer. Can we afford to have a number of liberal arts colleges ala Valpo which are sub-sized??? Are they fulfilling a purpose — or are they turning out to be another community college? It is time that this problem is given a hard look, before additional program proliferation makes it even more difficult.

I believe that we need a few good schools, amply supported by the Synod, and dedicated to a single purpose — that of providing our parishes with the world's best pastors and teachers. Our schools should be innovative, proud of their heritage and mission, supportive of our goals, and the best there are in the nation. They should concentrate on graduating people who understand God's Word, believe in their mission, and are trained to minister. We once had a seminary which became enthralled by academia — became interested in turning out scholars rather

than pastors. They boasted of academic degrees from great universities. We know the outcome, it led to disaster. We need scholarship, but not for the sake of scholarship alone. We do not need another ivory tower. Our primary function is to minister, and that should be taken into consideration in curriculum development. We also need to coordinate the programs of our two seminaries so that they supplement rather than compete.

4. *Missions.* I am not that familiar with latest trends, but I do know that our methodology should be constantly re-examined in the light of changing modes of communication and conditions. Every day brings new advances — some of which cause yesterday's programs to be outmoded today. Greenland's icy mountains are now in our living room via satellite communication. Are we using that gift (or curse, depending upon your viewpoint) to the greatest advantage? It seems to me that each culture is best equipped to bring the Gospel to its own. Perhaps we should concentrate on training indigenous workers — teaching them to use mass communications — and send our workers to the jungles within our cities, the heathen lands as close as our own backyards.

5. *Evangelism.* We need more good materials, written from a Lutheran perspective, and designed for teaching. The Kennedy-type training has great advantages, though the theology of conversion/sanctification needs to be worked through carefully and understood. We also need to redefine the role of the evangelist as one who bears the Good News, whether it be in a stranger's home, at a bedside, in a classroom during Sunday School, or over coffee. God has given people many gifts and talents, and He has tailored many tasks for his people, not all people for one task (such as ringing doorbells). Everybody should see themselves as an evangelist, and should be helped to carry out that role. Students need practical experience and training — we talk about it, study the why and how — but seldom actually do it. This year placement had a request for a teacher trained in evangelism. There was not one student in four schools to meet that need.

6. *Stewardship.* What a time for sacrificial giving — to help us be that blessing! Perhaps we should re-examine our philosophy here also — especially in light of Christ's statement that "we are happier when we are giving than when receiving." Do we perhaps stress the burden of giving (look what God has done for you), or the reward as material (it shall be given to you), and downplay the joy and fulfillment? I believe that one of the most basic of all human needs is the need to give, and that our offerings made to God are opportunities which He places before us in order that we might know personal fulfillment. I feel that this is why God gave Adam and Eve the tree, why the Old Testament people gave offerings (partially), and why we are given the mission of spreading the Gospel. Our members should be shown this. We need some good educational materials that stress this aspect.

7. *Law/Gospel Preaching.* We need a church that is not afraid to stand up and say "Thus says the Lord"! It is time that we again called sin a sin, rather than looking the other way. We have had courageous people speak on abortion — we need to do the same with other public sins that plague us. Most of our people are trained by the world, and operate with a form of situation ethics. We need to re-establish value systems based upon God's

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Women In

WITHIN the last few years the Lutheran Church in America has authorized the call and ordination of women to the public ministry, and the American Lutheran Church — over the protests of its supposed sister, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod — has followed suit. The California-Nevada District (although in an unconstitutional conclave) recently urged the Synod to take the same step. The faculty of Seminex, indeed, have prepared a woman for just this step into the pulpit by recently certifying her for a call into the Lutheran ministry. These actions of various Lutheran groups in America mesh very well, of course, with the women's liberation movement which forms such an important part of the current American social-political scene. Indeed, it is from this mounting movement in contemporary thought that the Lutheran proponents of female pastors have taken their cue. But contemporary thought is not the touchstone of true Lutheran theology. Rather, we must test the spirits — including the spirit of the age — whether they be of God. Only the Word of God, the Ancient of Days, not the words of modern men, is a safe guide for the Christian Church. And the introduction of women into the ministry, like so much else in current American thought, runs directly against the Word of God.

The Apostle Paul expresses the mind of God on this question as clearly as could possibly be done. "As in all the churches of the saints, the women should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, even as the law says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church. What! Did the Word of God originate with you, or are you the only ones it has reached? If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual, he should acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord. If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized," I Corinthians 14:33-38. "Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor," I Timothy 2:11-14.

THUS, the Apostle forbids women to speak (*lalein*) in church (I Cor. 14:34-35), commanding them rather to keep silence (*sigatān*, I Cor. 14:34), to learn in silence (*en hēsuchia*, I Tim. 2:12), and to remain in silence (*en hēsuchia*, I Tim. 2:13). The various Greek words employed by Paul do not, according to their general usage, preclude corporate participation by women in the liturgy and singing of the church; on other grounds, indeed, we can assume that Paul encouraged such participation. But the Apostle does reject all forms of individual female verbal expression in the church — preaching, reading Scripture lessons, leading prayers, conducting the liturgy, giving testimonies. All these activities are definitely embraced by the word *lalein* and, therefore, are actions which are *shameful* for women in the church (I Cor. 14:35). Indeed, even asking a question in church is, asserts Paul, a distinctly unwomanly activity. But it is of the essence of a pastor, of course, that he preaches, reads the Scripture, leads prayer, conducts the liturgy, asks questions, etc., in the church. Paul in writing to Timothy, moreover, specifically bars women from teaching men or exercising authority over them in the church. But again a pastor necessarily teaches men and exercises authority over them in the church. It follows,

therefore, that a "woman pastor" is a contradiction in terms. While the world may grant its recognition, no such creature exists in the sight of God.

Since the various Lutheran groups in this nation assert that the Holy Scriptures are the sole rule and norm of their teaching and practice, it is passing strange that any Lutheran should advocate the call and ordination of a woman to the public ministry. For the words of the Apostle as quoted above are so patent. Nevertheless, when a man has already formed a set idea of what is right and wrong on the basis of current thinking in his world, he will reject or avoid in some way or another even the most crystal-clear statement of God. And so many Lutherans today are taking some wide detours around the embarrassing collision of the Word of God with contemporary American concepts of womanhood.

THE most effective detour is to impeach the divinity of the relevant statements of Paul. There is no collision with the Word of God, according to many modern proponents of the female pastorate, because the Pauline prohibitions are not really part of the Word of God. To be sure, Paul customarily wrote at the direction of the Holy Spirit, but now and then, supposedly, he threw some of his own glass beads into the casket of pearls. I Corinthians 14 and I Timothy 2 are allegedly lapses of apostolic inspiration where Paul, with the best intentions but acting as a child of his own day, allowed the first-century notion of womanhood to countermand the leading of the Spirit. We of the twentieth century, on the other hand, due to our more congenial social circumstances, are more sensitive to the leading of the Spirit in the consideration of woman's role and so must correct Paul on this point. After all, Paul would want us to correct him where the more mature reflection of future ages would prove him lacking, would he not? No, he would not. Paul would appreciate such correction from us about as much as he appreciated the correction which he received from some mature thinkers in the churches of Galatia, Corinth, and Philippi. Actually, he uses the terms "false apostles," "deceitful workmen," and "servants of Satan," rather than "mature thinkers," for those who venture to place their own thoughts and words on the same level as those of an apostle of Christ and to correct him on some tidbit of teaching (II Cor. 11:12-15). "Their end will correspond to their deeds," says Paul.

WE must remember that Paul was, like the other apostles, appointed by Christ as an infallible teacher of His Church. In the performance of their teaching office, the apostles spoke and wrote all those words and only those words which the Holy Spirit supplied to them, so that everything which they taught by mouth or by pen was the absolute truth (Matthew 10:19-20; Mark 13:11; Luke 21:14-15; John 14:26; 16:13). Paul was called to this apostolate with miraculous attestation (Acts 9), received the acknowledgement of the earlier apostles (Acts 9:27-29; Gal. 2:9; II Peter 3:15-16), and authenticated his call by means of many miraculous signs (e.g., Acts 19:11-12; I Cor. 2:4; II Cor. 12:12). The Apostle Paul rightly claimed, therefore, that his teaching, whether oral or written, consisted exclusively in words supplied to him by the Holy Spirit to match the thoughts provided to him

he Ministry

by the same Spirit (I Cor. 2:13). Thus, Paul's words were God's words.

Indeed, Paul, anticipating any protest which might be lodged against his demand for female silence in the church, reminds his readers with a rhetorical question that God speaks through him, not them: "What! Did the Word of God originate with you . . . ?" (I Cor. 14:36). Paul rightly demands, therefore, that what he wrote on the place of women be acknowledged as a command of the Lord (v. 37) and suspends from the congregational fellowship anyone who does not so recognize it (v. 38). In I Timothy, likewise, Paul warns, concerning the apostolic instruction which constitute the letter, that those who have rejected them have made shipwreck of their faith and so have been turned over to Satan (1:18-20).

Now, the opponents of Paul's doctrine of womanhood sometimes object that the apostle himself admitted to lapses at times of divine inspiration. The favorite passage is I Corinthians 7:12, "To the rest I say — I, not the Lord." Paul, however, in I Corinthians 7 is distinguishing merely between commands which the Lord Jesus Himself gave during His earthly ministry (vv. 10-11; cf. Matt. 19) and commands now first enunciated by God through the Apostle. But Paul in no way insinuates that his own commands are less divine or authoritative than those of his Lord. The words of the historical Jesus and the words of the historical Paul are alike the words of the eternal God.

THERE remains, however, the second main way in which modern Lutheran proponents of female pastors seek to blunt the pointed words of Scripture. Very well, they say, if we must accept that Paul was speaking God's words in I Corinthians 14 and I Timothy 2, we may still maintain that he was speaking to the church of his time alone on account of its particular social circumstances, namely, the attitude toward women prevalent in the first century. The idea is that St. Paul did not wish to turn away potential converts by allowing a practice which would be repulsive to most people of his day. (Those who are familiar with the Graeco-Roman society of the first century, of course, will realize that, in actuality, women did hold high ecclesiastical office in other religions, including the teaching office, and that first-century men must have found Paul's views on this matter quite strange.) Our contemporaries urge that the female pastorate may now be introduced into the church, since the practice is no longer repulsive to society in general and since Paul was not, they say, banning it for all time. This last assertion they base upon passages like Galatians 3:28 which speak of the equality of the sexes in Christ, claiming that such sentiments cannot be reconciled with a permanent ban on female pastors.

Now, it is true that the commands of Scripture are frequently of temporary, rather than permanent, force. One example was the command to keep the Sabbath during the Old Testament era. An example from I Corinthians 14 itself was the instruction not to forbid speaking in tongues during the apostolic period of the church. The Sabbath law was abrogated when Christ came into the world as a man; the directives about tongues became inapplicable when tongues ceased after the death of the apostles.

BUT the question is: Does the apostolic exclusion of women from the ministry fall into this category of temporary injunctions?

The answer is no. In the first place, Galatians 3:28 does not apply to this matter. St. Paul makes the important point there, to be sure, that men and women are one in Christ Jesus and co-heirs of His gifts. But it by no means follows from this truth that women are eligible for the ministry. Such a line of argument confuses spiritual unity with identity in role. Children, after all, are one with adults in Christ Jesus, but we dare not conclude that children too are eligible for the ministry.

Secondly, Paul does not base his doctrine of woman's place in the church merely on passing social circumstances. Rather, he deduces it from universal truths which can never be altered — so long, at least, as this world endures. In I Corinthians 14 he appeals to the Law, that is, the Old Testament, in support of his position (v. 34); Paul is talking, then, about an enduring precept rather than a momentary expedient. We learn from the parallel passage in I Timothy that the Old Testament section which Paul has particularly in mind is Genesis 2-3, the account of the creation and fall of mankind, specific historical events of universal significance which define for all time the correct relationship between man and woman.

The Apostle points his pen at two elements in this Genesis account which substantiate his thesis that the role of woman in the church is silent submissiveness in the presence of men. The first is that woman was created from man and for man and is, therefore, by nature subordinate to man (Genesis 2:18-23; I Tim. 2:13). The second is that woman was deceived by Satan into sinning against God when she coveted a place in the scheme of things higher than that allocated to her by God; and man yielded himself to sin when, against better knowledge, he acceded authority over him to the woman as she urged him to eat of the fruit which God had forbidden (Gen. 3:6, 17; I Tim. 2:14).

THESE historical facts, Paul rightly argues, show how perverted it is for women to teach men. To accept a woman pastor, then, is to attack the divine order of creation, the relationship in which the various creatures of God stand to each other and to Him on the basis of their creation by Him. Some of our contemporaries, to be sure, would have us believe that this order of creation does not apply in the Church of Christ; they assume that Christians are all equal in authority by virtue of their common faith. But Paul makes clear in the passages before us that one's position in the order of creation is, in fact, hallowed by one's incorporation through faith into Christ and His Church. Our Lord Himself, indeed, directs His followers to the original pattern of this order as a pure expression of God's will and the ideal form of Christian conduct (Matt. 19:8). The divine order of creation does not apply in the Church of Christ; they ought to be more manifest there than anywhere else. Women have, to be sure, many important roles to fulfil in the church, but the ministry is not one of them. Just as the bearing of children is assigned exclusively to the woman (I Tim. 2:15), so the duties of the pastor are assigned exclusively to the man (I Tim. 3:2).

Thus, the attempt to restrict the application of Paul's remarks to his own century is as futile as the endeavor to deny their divinity. The proposed detours are blocked with unbudgeable barricades. In the apostolic exclusion of women from the ministry God Himself is speaking — and He is speaking to us.

[See next page, p. 6]

Prof. Douglas Judisch
Concordia Seminary
Fort Wayne, Indiana

3-09

(Continued from Page 1)

Moreover, to complain that 3-09 should be rescinded simply because it does not name individuals is to misunderstand both its structure and purpose. There is, of course, a time and manner for dealing with individuals. That function Synod in the final "Resolved" of 3-09 properly assigned to the seminary Board of Control. Therefore, 3-09 itself does not so much file charges as it declares the judgment of the church on what is true and what is false doctrine especially in the controverted area of Scripture itself, its origin, character, authority, inspiration, and inerrancy.

This approach of setting forth the true and condemning the false is in the best tradition of Scripture itself and the Lutheran Confessions. St. Paul, dealing with widespread false doctrine in the Galatian parishes, wrote, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law, ye are fallen from grace." Was no one "guilty" in Galatia until individual charges were filed and processed? Ridiculous!

IN the same manner, also the Lutheran Confessions consistently first set forth the Scriptural truth in a given point of doctrine and then continue, "they condemn the Pelagians (Anabaptists, Donatists, etc.) and others who deny that . . ." Was everybody innocent of false doctrine simply because individual names were not given? Were the Confessions unfair in putting a whole group "under a cloud"? Nonsense!

To say, because no one is specifically named in 3-09, that every member of the faculty majority is somehow innocent of false doctrine, pure in his theology, and "in good standing" in the church, is naive, unrealistic, and simply untrue. We have had quite enough of this legalistic subterfuge which insists that a man cannot possibly be guilty of false doctrine as long as his name is listed in the Lutheran Annual.

To sum up, Resolution 3-09 represents a major doctrinal formulation in the history of the Missouri Synod. It is thoroughgoing in its historical perspective and is solidly Lutheran in theology. It is in harmony both with the Scriptures and with the Lutheran Confessions in the manner in which it declares the church's solemn judgment.

At Dallas in 1977 the church, gratefully recognizing the resolution's historic and theological value, will resist any effort to tamper with either its structure or its content.

The Rev. Ewald J. Otto, Pastor
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Quincy, Illinois

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For *Affirm* is unashamedly dedicated to preserving, under grace, Missouri's priceless theological heritage, based on the Word and set forth in the Book of Concord, as both have been commonly understood in Missouri until the most recent times.

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It would also be helpful if names and addresses were printed clearly or typewritten.

On the News Front: (Continued from Page 2)

For each charge made, living witnesses or written documented evidence must be offered. In Scriptural and Confessional matters, the charges must be supported by clear statements from both.

No less than three formal face to face meetings are provided for under bylaw 6-79, in the event that the private discussions of the parties to the case have reached an impasse. A minimum of two face to face meetings could be held under bylaw 6.80 and the process it requires. In each of the two separate processes, a series of appeals is available to both parties. Every precaution is taken to be sure that the matter is dealt with on the basis of the facts of the case.

Counting all the individuals directly involved or asked to deal with the case, one is surprised to learn that the minimum of 60 people could be involved. This does not count witnesses for either side.

The members of Synod should know that throughout the entire two track process, the plaintiffs are required to pay their own expenses. Transportation, housing, and meals for themselves, witnesses and theological and legal counsel. Phone, postage, stationery and reproduction materials, all are included in the expense. The man-hours of labor are free.

The final observation is, all the foregoing came after the plaintiffs spent hundreds of hours studying and hearing testimony on the very matters that were investigated by Synodical Committee #3 of the New Orleans Convention, concerning Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. They were members of that Committee. Their attempt to show a brother the error of his ways has to be a landmark example of Christian patience.

* * *

RECENTLY, I have heard rumors that the two seminaries in St. Louis and in Springfield-Fort Wayne are not getting along so well. As the President of one of these schools, I want to discount emphatically such rumors. It is true, of course, that both seminaries are accredited by the ATS and have very similar programs; this is necessary in the 1970's and will continue to be necessary in the future. It is true that our seminary has inaugurated a graduate program (thus far at no expense to the Synod) which leads to a MAR, an STM, and a D.Min. degree. This program, however, is quite different from the one at St. Louis, which is an academic program training people to be teachers in the church, whereas our program in every case simply helps them to be better pastors. We offer a D.Min. degree, the St. Louis seminary offers a Th.D. degree — a far more difficult degree to attain.

It is true that sometimes in our recruitment, we will speak to the same students as St. Louis speaks to.

But apart from these factors which have been the case for sometime and will continue to be the case, the two seminaries have never been closer together in the memory of any living person than they are at the present time. After the debacle at St. Louis two years ago and after a new faculty was established there, we have had regular meetings between the two seminaries — complete doctrinal agreement obtains. As a matter of fact, some of the best friends that each of us have in all the world, are at the other seminary than at the one at which we work.

With the move to Fort Wayne, what might appear to be a certain amount of competition today will dwindle. The presidents of both seminaries are meeting with representatives of the Board for Higher Education to coordinate efforts. In every respect the relationship between the two seminaries is the finest that one could wish for.

I hope that this short testimonial of mine as the President of Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Fort Wayne, will dispel any idea that there is friction, misunderstanding, or undue competition between the schools. — *Dr. Robert Preus*

Erratum

Professor David Scaer of Springfield noted that one of the sentences of his article in the last issue of *Affirm* should read,

"Secondly, the Moderate position does not recognize the basic qualitative difference between the Spirit's work in the writers of the Scriptures and in Christians who come to faith through those Scriptures."

He explains his meaning, "Conservatives hold that the same Holy Spirit who gave us the Scriptures is responsible for faith in the heart of the Christian, but the Spirit's activity in each of these cases is of a different kind. The Moderate caucus does not make this distinction."

Letter —

(Continued from Page 3)

law rather than man's desires. I believe that we are presently swinging back to the right, and that the world is looking for firm guidance.

8. *Adult Education.* We need more good, practical Bible study guides, aimed at laymen and built around day-to-day needs. Perhaps home Bible classes are not the best, and you may not agree with the concept, but they are effective. Maybe it is our fault that we have not provided training or materials in any great number. I had such a class in our home — and looked in vain for materials to help me. We have fought so hard for the Bible over the past years. Wouldn't it be a shame if we now placed it on the shelf? There is power in that Word — but it has to speak to us. We need fresh, new programs that will get our members into God's Word on a daily basis.

Prof. Richard G. Korthals
Concordia Teachers College
River Forest, Illinois

We Need Your Help!

As events in Missouri indicate — some of them summarized on these pages — Missouri may be passing through her most crucial and darkest hour.

Most of us probably thought that the sound Anaheim resolutions for dealing on a practical level with our difficulties would shift the scene of the struggle to the district and congregational level, where it would be resolved within a year or so at the outside.

Those of us responsible for publishing *Affirm* began to feel a sense of relief and hoped that we might soon be able to discontinue *Affirm*; we anticipated a solid and united Missouri reemerging with its old doctrine stance clarified.

We had good reasons to believe this; we have men representing historical Missouri in the Synod's key posts; we have the doctrinal resolutions of New Orleans behind us; and building on their base, we have the practical resolutions of Anaheim.

Yet as time passes it appears that the struggle in Missouri is deepening and that the many months to Dallas may prove even more crucial than the months before previous conventions.

We are still confident of God's presence and the joy in Christ!

We are also confident that the many of you who have seen us through the struggle the past five years *Affirm* has been publishing will continue to pray for the success of our common cause, to work for it and to contribute toward it. With a circulation now over 100,000 and with inflationary costs affecting us, you will appreciate that *Affirm* needs your contributions now.

Please help us as generously as you can now and throughout the year! We make our plea in the name of Christ and His pure Gospel.

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"I believed,
and therefore have
I spoken"
II Cor. 4:13

Dallas, 1977, and the Districts, 1978

AT the Anaheim Convention Missouri passed Resolution 3-06 which made clear Synod's position on Evangelical Lutherans in Mission (ELIM).

The resolution first recited the history of the founding of ELIM in 1973 as well as its actions since then.

Included in this narration of ELIM's history are quotations in which ELIM clearly states its purposes.

Also included in the narration is a record of the appeals made in loving and fraternal manner to those belonging to ELIM or sympathetically acting in concert with it to refrain from most of the activities in which it was engaging and still is.

Resolution 3-06 summarized Missouri's concerns about ELIM in the last WHEREAS of the resolution. It reads as follows:

WHEREAS, Although the organization known as ELIM (Evangelical Lutherans in Mission) is not, per se, an organization to be condemned in that the opportunity for such an organization to be of service to God and His church is indeed great, nevertheless, the way in which ELIM has functioned since its creation has, in significant part, been in violation of the precepts set forth above, especially in its support of a competing seminary, its establishment of a competing mission program, its encouragement of congregations to withhold financial support from the Synod and to call uncertified men as pastors, and its announcement that it is interested in initiating an alternate system of teacher education.

THE conclusions Synod reached in a series of *Resolves* is that ELIM functions in a schismatic way and violates the first object of Synod, that its acts are furthermore inconsistent with membership in Synod, show a failure to cooperate with Synod, and give offense by their conduct.

Synod also concluded that those who hold positions with the Synod, with a District of the Synod, or with other organizations controlled by the Synod, and who, therefore, play active roles in schismatic functions are also giving offense by their conduct.

Further, the convention asked its congregations, officers and boards to minister evangelically and pastorally to those who under their supervision are active in schismatic functions with the intention that "they (i) cease such roles, or (ii) disassociate themselves with ELIM so long as it continues those schismatic functions, or (iii) in conscience terminate their membership rather than to continue to act so as to divide and weaken it . . ."

Synod also resolved,

That in the case of those officers of the Synod and members of the faculties of synodical institutions with whom patient and pastoral admonition has proven

futile, appropriate action be taken on the basis of the synodical *Handbook*;

Synod concluded with two additional resolutions: it declared its willingness to listen to and discuss grievances at all appropriate levels in the spirit of our Lord and Savior, and it besought all members who dissent from Synod to follow mutually adopted procedures for expressing their dissent.

3-06 affirms, as it did to the convention and as it does to most of Missouri's clergy and laity across the nation a fair, reasonable, and totally evangelical approach to a problem which has disturbed the church for some years.

AFFIRM wonders what congregations, districts, boards and other official bodies within Missouri will be able to report to the Dallas Convention concerning the actions they took according to 3-06! As the paragraphs of 3-06, which have been cited, make amply clear, this resolution calls for appropriate action taken in an evangelical and pastoral manner.

If ELIM, a church within a church, can be tolerated until the Dallas Convention, two years after the passage of 3-06, *Affirm* predicts a confused and troubled future for Missouri.

Moreover, as events of the last half year or so have clearly indicated, one of the keys to maintaining Missouri as a confessional church is her district presidents. They wield a tremendous influence within the jurisdictions they lead. That eight of them before Anaheim ordained Seminex grads and some of them ordained graduates of this school after Anaheim, indicates how much they help mold the direction their districts take.

Other district presidents, in addition to these eight, have shown sympathy with those of liberal tendencies. They have on occasion shown themselves dangerous to Missouri's doctrinal and confessional stance. Unless they have a major change of heart, they may continue to be a difficulty to the church.

For this reason, Missourians in districts with such presidents should begin to look ahead to the 1978 elections of their presidents.

If, after discussions with these presidents and after evangelical admonitions of them, they show no sign of change, *Affirm* urges that all who are concerned with confessional Lutheranism evaluate the doctrinal stance of these presidents and, if they find this stance and their actions unacceptable, that they begin to think in terms of Lutheran clergy who might be elected to the district presidencies to replace present incumbents.

May all those who must act in the matter of ELIM and in the matter of district presidents do so patiently, pastorally, evangelically, but firmly! May they do so in the name of our Lord and to His glory and the welfare of the whole church!

Much has already been accomplished! These last steps remain to be taken in love.

AELC Again

IT is the time for some plain talk. A new church body, AELC (Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches), in the form of a federation of regional synods, hopes to get under way at a Chicago meeting December 4-5. Pastors trained under a liberal seminary regime, together with some liberal district presidents, are working with might and main to draw enough congregations out of Missouri to add yet another church denomination to the American scene.

For these brothers we have some suggestions. To "tell it like it is" often is not pleasant, but it is salutary. These thoughts for their pondering may be blunt, but they are made in sincerity and in love.

1. Brethren, please make an honest evaluation of your personal dilemma. What you really want is a liberalism in doctrine and practice neither previously nor presently tolerated by the Missouri Synod. That Synod wishes to stay on the old paths was made abundantly clear at both the New Orleans and the Anaheim Conventions.

Do not further deceive yourselves by talking of a "Preus grab for power." You know that in our church body the presidency is carefully limited and that Dr. Preus operates under the same constitutional limitations which were in effect under Presidents Behnken and Harms.

Please do not further delude yourselves with the red herring of alleged injustices by the St. Louis Seminary Board of Control. You know that the Board of Control was more than patient in properly following the charges against Dr. Tietjen through fourteen months of procedure and careful evaluation by three elected boards of Synod. Face the fact that the former faculty, as admitted by one of its members, simply "gambled and lost" in its monumental act of rebellion designed to force the capitulation of a properly constituted synodical board.

Please, no longer repeat the falsehood that the "A Statement," offered for guidance to the St. Louis Seminary Board of Control by President Preus, is somehow a new theological standard. Recognize as do even liberal theologians, that "A Statement" is the old Missouri doctrine and simply takes out of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions what bears on the present doctrinal controversy.

Please no longer repeat the canard that in the Missouri Synod there is a stifling of dissent. Synod, recognizing its fallibility, has well-established and fair procedures for hearing such dissent and it has been more than patient with dissenters.

Please, face up to it that the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America have all the pastors they need. They can use you only if you bring your parishes with you and many of you may not be able to deliver that package. You must, therefore, ask yourself whether you are simply staying in the Missouri Synod for the pay check in what even liberal theologian Richard Neuhaus has called a "sordid accommodation."

Please be done with all self-deception, red herrings, and side issues. Recognize your fundamental dilemma in wanting a doctrinal permissiveness which is out of step with the Missouri Synod.

2. Please take an honest look at what you are doing to congregations. Your use of God's pulpits for constant protest, belittling of Synod, and castigation of the synodical administration is unseemly, to say the least. The church, both in its broad and narrow sense, cannot be built on negativism. Your constant carping is resulting in parish divisions that are almost schizophrenic. From one congregation after another one hears "We had a liberal pastor. He has finally left, but our congrega-

tion is a shambles, with members not speaking to each other. Or, again, "We have a liberal pastor whose so-called sermons are nothing but criticism and complaint, with the result that our congregation of 430 communicants is down to an average Sunday attendance of 75."

Please recognize that your efforts to take congregations out of the Missouri Synod for a nucleus of a new church body are really an unethical proselytizing which we used to call "sheep stealing."

3. Please give some thought to what you are doing to the Missouri Synod. To be sure, God uses everything, "blessings and blessing, pain and pleasure," to achieve His purposes. Thus, some good things are coming out of this controversy. The blessings of the Missouri Synod are no longer being taken for granted. Purity of doctrine is increasingly recognized for the precious divine benediction that it is. Laymen are studying the Word of God as never before. Many now quite at home in the Lutheran Confessions a few years ago did not even know what they were. All of this is to the good.

However, at the same time, your efforts to alter Synod's doctrinal position also have necessitated an appalling expenditure of time, thought, and energy, and a distraction from our God-given assignments. Please cease using pious platitudes to hide what you are really doing to our Synod. For example, Professor Robert Bertram at the August ELIM meeting said, "ELIM, which has always denied that it is a separate denomination, is an attempt rather to embody the confessional movement organizationally." But the fact is that ELIM is actually a denomination with denominational programs that are in direct opposition to and in competition with those of our Synod. Please face the translation of Dr. Bertram's sentence as saying that since many liberals cannot get their congregations out of Synod they will stay within those congregations and try to draw them away from Synod's doctrinal position.

4. Finally, take a good look at what is happening to your own integrity. Your personal unresolved dilemma spelled out above must take some toll on you in a constant state of unhappiness, discontentment and frustration. Failing to face the fact that in the real world we sometimes lose, your tears of self-pity represent a steady erosion of your own integrity.

You repeatedly say that Synod is evil and corrupt, that its doctrinal position is a sub-Lutheran one which silences the Gospel, that Missouri is dead and that the dead should be left to bury the dead. In making those charges you either are knowingly lying or else voicing your honest convictions. We refuse to believe that you are lying. If, then, that is what you really believe about the Missouri Synod, have the courage of your convictions and do not sell your souls for a mess of pottage by remaining in a church body whose stand, in your opinion, is contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

SOME wonderful things are happening in the Missouri Synod. The schools which supply the pastors for our pulpits and the teachers for our parochial schools are flourishing. The rebuilding at our St. Louis Seminary has taken place far beyond anyone's fondest dreams and prayers. Its present total enrollment of 354 is 70 higher than last year, 160 over the previous year and almost four times the number of those who remained on the campus after the walkout of faculty and students in the spring of 1974.

(Continued on Page 7)

What About Missouri's 'Tradition'?

PRESIDENT Preus of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod appointed fifteen professors, pastors and laymen to a committee called "Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Conciliation (ACDC)," who were asked to define the doctrinal issues as seen by these men relative to the doctrinal differences that had surfaced in the LCMS during the last decade, if not even earlier than ten years ago. In May, 1976 the report of the ACDC was released to the Lutheran public in which the two groups, called in the *Report* the "moderates" and the "conservatives" set forth position papers on (1) Inspiration and Inerrancy, (2) Gospel and Scripture, (3) Historical-Critical Method, (4) Third Use of the Law. These comprised Part I of the *Report*, while Part II gave the moderate proposals for solving the doctrinal problems facing the Synod, followed in turn by the conservative proposals. The 147-page *Report* concludes with two appendices. A careful reading of this document clearly shows that since 1947 (the year of the centennial of the LCMS) some serious doctrinal differences have arisen which also effect the practice of the Synod relative to those Lutherans and Christians who are in doctrinal disagreement with the LCMS and also have different church religious practices.

The reasons for the appointment of this 15-man committee are given by Dr. J. A. O. Preus in the foreword as follows:

For many years, going back to the administrations of President Behnken and President Harms, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has been involved in doctrinal controversy. Charges and counter charges of doctrinal difference within the Synod have abounded. These matters came to a head and were the central focus of attention at the 1973 synodical convention. At this convention "A Statement of Scriptural and Confessional Principles" was adopted by the Synod as a "more formal and comprehensive statement of belief" (1973 Resolution 3-01), and that which has been referred to as a "faculty majority position" was rejected. Following the 1973 convention, charges, including charges of false doctrine, were brought against the president of Concordia Seminary and he was suspended from office.

Dr. Preus claimed that for a number of years confusion characterized the doctrinal discussions in the LCMS and this was especially the situation since the New Orleans Convention. Because of this confusion the Synodical President, after consultation with the Council of Presidents, the Board of Directors, and the Committee on Theology and Church Relations, appointed the ACDC. The committee was composed of "moderates" who were: Dr. James Childs, Jr., Mr. Walter A. Christopher, Dr. Carl A. Gaertner, Dr. Lloyd H. Goetz, Dr. Ralph W. Klein, Dr. A. Lischer and Reverend Samuel Roth. The conservatives group consisted of the following: Dr. Karl L. Barth, the Reverend Wm. T. Eggers, Dr. Arthur Graudin, Dr. H. Armin Moellering, Dr. Robert D. Preus, Dr. Don Ridgeway and Dr. Lorenz Wunderlich.

BY December, 1975 the completed report was delivered to President Preus and was sent out to the clergy of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in May, 1976. Additional copies may be purchased from Concordia Publishing House at \$2.00 per copy or \$7.50 in lots of five (cash with order).

The *Lutheran Witness* issue of August 29, 1976 has a letter signed by the moderate group complaining "that barely a month after our report reached the light of day, this piece put out by the

synodical administration undercuts virtually everything we tried to say about the Scriptures during the 15 months of our services on the committee." The letter of protest refers to "Walking Together," which while not specifically referring to the moderates of the ACDC report claims that some (unnamed) in the Synod take the position that only certain parts of the Bible are to be regarded as the Word of God, implying that this is the moderate stance.

The moderates of the ACDC in their portion of the *Report* stated: "The Scriptures are the inspired Word of God and therefore the only norm of doctrine and practice . . . The inspiration of the Scriptures is verbal (i.e., the Holy Spirit inspired the very words of Scripture) and it is plenary (i.e., all the Scripture is inspired) (Inspiration and Inerrancy, pp. 2-3). In the document of Gospel and Scripture, p. 38 the assertion is made: 'The Scriptures are the written Word of God.' In the moderate section treating of the Historical-Critical Method, p. 74, this statement is found: 'All sides in the present controversy affirm the authority of the Holy Scriptures as the very Word of God.'"

SINCE supposedly both the conservatives and moderates believe the Old and New Testaments are the inspired Word of God and appear to hold to the fact that every Word is inspired by God, it is extremely puzzling why such serious theological differences should have arisen in the Synod especially during the last two decades, although there were rumblings between 1940 and 1950. In explaining the differences the moderates in their letter to *The Lutheran Witness* state that they have recommended that all controverted issues "take seriously the principles of letting Scripture alone be our source and norm for doctrine." In confessional Lutheranism the *sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone) principle, as well as in the history of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, this has been a basic presupposition when establishing church doctrine and practice. Since both sides in the controversy claim to draw all their teachings pertaining to belief and practice *only* from Holy Writ, why then these doctrinal differences?

The answer of the moderates, as given in *The Lutheran Witness* letter is: "What we have advocated from the beginning is a fresh look at Scripture itself in all controverted issues and taking seriously the principle of letting Scripture alone be our source and norm for doctrine. 'Walking Together' indicates clearly once again that in our Synod tradition is really the norm in our doctrinal disagreements. Any view other than the traditional is "doubting" or even "rejecting Bible teachings."

The LCMS doctrinal stance is here labelled as a "tradition," one which is supposedly not in harmony with the Holy Scriptures. In the past history of the LCMS the latter has interpreted the Bible in such a way of setting forth doctrinal statements and taken positions on ethical questions which the moderates claim do not reflect a correct stance, yes, even amount to false interpretation of the Scripture. So the readers of *The Lutheran Witness* are to believe that the moderates are not establishing a tradition inimical to the Bible's teachings but truthfully and reliably explicating its important teachings. Thus we are supposed to have the following contrasts: Scripture plus tradition (Missouri Synod) versus Scripture alone (Moderates).

(Continued on Page 6)

SOME years ago historian Charles M. Andrews wrote:

When a stranger asked Parson Phillips of the South Church at Andover if he were "the parson who serves here," he received the reply, "I am, sir, the parson who rules here" . . . 1

The Historical Predicament

HUMOROUSLY, but aptly, Professor Andrews has suggested a perennial predicament facing Christians committed to congregational polity.

I. On the one hand they are fully persuaded that congregationalism is pre-eminently the New Testament form of church-order. As John Theodore Mueller observed,

. . . the correct, Scriptural principle (is) that the local church is divinely appointed and is vested not only with the Office of the Keys, but with supreme authority to direct all matters pertaining to church polity . . . 2

Or, as Henry Eyster Jacobs wrote, "it is never to be forgotten that all the power of the Church exists in its smallest congregation, and is not derived by the local assemblies through large Particular Churches . . ." 3 Quite simply, the New Testament "does not provide for a long and complicated series of agencies, whereby we may reach Christ and Christ may reach us." 4

II. On the other hand, however, a candid congregationalist must confess that this system of church order can quickly degenerate into church *dis*-order.

Historically, this has taken one of two forms — separatism and clericalism.

SEPARATISM is ecclesiastical isolationism. It means the segregation of a congregation from the larger Christian community. Usually this practice is called "independency" to differentiate it from true congregationalism. Withdrawal from fellowship with other Christian churches can be caused by doctrinal aberration (heresy) or by social and personal animosity (schism). Such non-doctrinal factors include language, ecclesiastical customs, forms, usages, and life-styles.

A "malicious independency" can be motivated by spite and uncharitableness, whereas a "non-malicious independency" can be caused simply by ignorance, prejudice, or indifference to Christian brethren. Whatever the source, independency leads to a multiplication of rival congregations in a community, their mutual hostility, and the reduction of the Church of Jesus Christ to impotency and mediocrity. From this anarchy may come tyranny. Excessive and irresponsible fragmentation may eventually result in some sort of compulsory unification of the churches. Something like this occurred in antiquity as the early Christians abused the privilege of congregational order, plunged the churches into the pitfalls of heresy and schism, and finally ended up under the absolute rule of the Roman papacy.

CLERICALISM is a related phenomenon. It is the tyranny of the clergy over the laity. Frequently it begins on the local level as a pastor talks of "his church" or "my church." Perhaps clericalism may begin simply because of the "cult of personality." Like Parson Phillips of Andover, the parish pastor may regard himself as the lord of his flock, as the "pope-in-residence." Somewhere along the line the messenger and the message become confused — and even identified.

At this point exaggerated notions concerning the privilege of the office of the ministry may be introduced. Either way, the

Why

Some Historical, Biblical

people are manipulated to serve the needs of the preacher, and the pastor ceases to be Christ's minister to their spiritual needs. This problem was already present in the New Testament. Paul saw how suddenly congregationalism in Corinth occasioned the appearance of "pulpiters" and "prima donnas." The Apostle chided the Christians in Corinth for saying " 'I belong to Paul' or 'I belong to Apollos,' or 'I belong to Cephas,' or 'I belong to Christ' " (I Corinthians 1:12 RSV).

That this division (a kind of clerical independency) was due to clashing personalities and not to differing theologies has been demonstrated by the German scholar, Dr. Karl Graul. He wrote: "Paul, Cephas, and Apollos, however, *differed* in their doctrine not as to matter; the appellations 'of Paul, of Apollos, of Cephas' originated only in a party spirit which looked to the person rather than the matter." 5

Or, Dr. Martin Luther, commenting on the same text, remarked: "Here you must not speak empty words, but confess Christ freely, whether Luther, Claus, or George have preached him. Do not regard the person, but confess the doctrine." 6 To disregard Luther's counsel and to exalt the person (or parson) at the expense of the theology and unity of the churches, is the spirit of Anti-Christ. It places a person, the pastor, in the position of honor that only Christ should occupy.

Once this was accepted on the congregational level in the ancient church, it was but a matter of time until one parish pastor, or bishop, came to predominate over the others. Rome's Senior Minister, the Pope, by the cult of personality and by a false sense of clerical privilege, upstaged his thousands of rivals in lesser towns and villages and made himself the *one* prima donna in the churches.

Once again anarchy led to tyranny — as congregational liberty was lost — first to the pretensions of the parish pastor, then to the pretensions of the Roman Pope. But does it really matter whether we have one Pope in Rome — or a thousand-and-one mini-popes, one per parish, scattered in every city? The mood is that of "the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God" (II Thessolians 1:4 RSV).

But Biblical Christianity knows a way to preserve genuine congregationalism. It is the practice of the association of congregations in synods. In such a fashion separatism, clericalism, anarchy and tyranny are all successfully avoided and Christian liberty, empathy, and unity are preserved.

The Biblical Precedent

THE word "synod" is derived from the Greek, *synodos*, meaning "a meeting." In pagan times there were meetings devoted to all kinds of matters from athletic games to political elections. In Christian usage the term "synod" first referred to "a council or assembly of churches." "Synod" was often used as a synonym for "association," "consociation," "congress," "conference," or "council."

Our Lutheran fathers were well informed concerning the Biblical and patristic custom of convening synods. "In councils," wrote Caspar Brochmann, the Orthodox Danish theologian, "the teachers and delegates of the church are assembled." David Hollazius saw a council or synod as being composed not merely of "the presiding officers, not only bishops, teachers, and pastors, but laymen also, well versed in

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sacred literature, godly lovers of truth and peace, delegated by the churches to give their vote concerning the subjects proposed." Brochmann also emphasized the role of the laity in such councils "provided they be experienced and skillful in sacred matters, godly and peace loving."

As to the work of such a council, or synod, Andrew Quenstedt felt that the delegates "formally assembled for the purpose of deciding questions concerning the doctrine of faith and practice." In another context Quenstedt elaborated on this statement: "The subjects with which councils are occupied are questions concerning the doctrines of faith, the practical duties, and the ceremonies of the Church of Christ." Brochmann stressed that synods have the task "committed by the entire communion of believers of examining and deciding concerning the public interpretation of doctrine in doubtful and controverted points." Hollazius concurred that "councils possess great authority, and this is both *decretory* (in establishing good order, and appointing rites, and correcting the morals of the church, in order that all things may be done decently and in order) (I Corinthians 14:40), and *decisive* (in doctrine in faith)."

Such "synods" or "councils" could be held occasionally, sporadically, periodically, or regularly. They were held for the purpose of mutual consultation and have a double meaning: a synod was a parliament composed of representatives of the churches, meeting at intervals for stated doctrinal and practical business; a synod was also a set of programs and agencies created by the churches to accomplish particular tasks of ministry. Synod came to mean both public deliberation and common endeavor by churches of a common confession. ⁷

THE theologians of the Age of Lutheran Orthodoxy had a healthy respect for synods because they saw them as the safeguard of doctrinal purity, fraternal unity, and Christian liberty. As such salutary institutions, synods rested on Biblical precedents in both the Old and New Testaments.

In the Old Testament, after the exodus, as the children of Israel moved through the wilderness,

... The Lord said to Moses, "Gather for me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them, and bring them to the tent of meeting, and let them take their stand there with you. And I will come down and talk with you there; and I will take some of the spirit which is upon you and put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, that you may not bear it yourself alone." (Numbers 11:16, 17 RSV).

Or again, Moses taught that if there was

... any case within your towns which is too difficult for you, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the Lord your God will choose, and coming to the Levitical priests, and to the judge who is in office in those days, you shall consult them, and they shall declare to you the decision. Then you shall do according to what they declare to you from that place which the Lord will choose; and you shall be careful to do according to all that they direct you ... (Deuteronomy 17:8-10 RSV).

Still later, Samuel called councils or synods, for we read that "all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel

at Ramah" (I Samuel 8:4 RSV). As today individuals and families form congregations, which are then represented in synods, so in ancient Israel individuals and families formed tribes, which were represented in national councils. David the King celebrated this practice in poetry, writing of

Jerusalem, built as a city
which is bound firmly together,
to which the tribes go up,
the tribes of the Lord,
as was decreed for Israel,
to give thanks to the name of the
Lord.

There thrones for judgment were
set,
the thrones of the house of
David. (Psalm 122:3-5 RSV).

The conciliar or synodical principle was well-known among God's people of the Old Covenant.

Not only in the Jewish but also in the Christian church councils or synod were to be prominent. In the New Testament we learned of a synod convened in Jerusalem in A.D. 50 to settle the question of the conditions for the inclusion of Gentile members in the churches. This synod not only decided the matter but had the right to rebuke the Judaizers as well. A general letter was issued:

The brethren, both the apostles and the elders, to the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greeting. Since we have heard that some persons from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your minds, although we gave them no instructions, it has seemed good to us in assembly to choose men and send them to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul ... (Acts 15:23-25 RSV).

The consequence was that Paul and Silas went through Anatolia, and

... as they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions which had been reached by the apostles and elders who were at Jerusalem so the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily. (Acts 16:4,5 RSV).

Hollazius believed all synods were "inaugurated by the renowned apostolic conference at Jerusalem." The New Testament churches saw such mutual consultation and cooperation as the way to maintain both congregationalism and confessionalism. This is further suggested by the fact that Paul sent an encyclical letter to the Ephesian Christians, St. John the Divine received a revelation designed for "the seven churches that are in Asia" (Revelation 1:4 RSV), and St. Peter addressed himself "to the exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia" (I Peter 1:1 RSV). Primitive Christianity was thoroughly familiar with synodical principles and practice.

A Practical Development

THROUGH the subsequent centuries it has been obvious to believers that the Lord Jesus Christ has commanded us to do things which, under ordinary circumstances, the average congregation cannot do alone. For this reason churches join together to establish

... educational and benevolent institutions ...
Missionary Boards and Societies, and all other agencies for the dissemination of God's Word, the supply

(Continued on Page 6)